UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
3 1761 00965 19

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/caliphateitsrise00muiruoft

62

THE CALIPHATE

WORKS BY SIR WILLIAM MUIR.

THE MOHAMMEDAN CONTROVERSY; BIOGRAPHIES OF MOHAMMED; SPRENGER ON TRADITION; THE INDIAN LITURGY AND THE PSALTER. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

EDINBURGH: T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.

THE LIFE OF MAHOMET. From Original Sources. Third Edition. 8vo, 16s.

THE MAMELUKE OR SLAVE DYNASTY OF EGYPT, 1260–1517 A.D., *END OF THE CALIPHATE.*

LONDON: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE.

MAHOMET AND ISLAM. A Sketch of the Prophet's Life, and a brief Outline of his Religion. With Illustrations and Map. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF ISLAM. Present Day Tract. No. 14. 4d.

THE LORD'S SUPPER: An Abiding Witness to the Death of Christ. Present Day Tract. No. 36. 4d.

SWEET FIRST-FRUITS. A Tale of the Nineteenth Century, on the Truth and Virtue of the Christian Religion. Translated from the Arabic. By Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

THE BEACON OF TRUTH; or, Testimony of the Coran to the Truth of the Christian Religion. Translated from the Arabic by Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

LONDON: THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, 56 PATERNOSTER ROW.

THE CORAN: Its Composition and Teaching, and the Testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures. By Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I. New Edition. Fcap. 8vo, 2s. 6d.

THE APOLOGY OF AL KINDY. Second Edition. 1887.

THE TEACHING OF THE CORAN.

LONDON: SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

THE CALIPHATE

TS RISE, DECLINE, AND FALL

FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES

BY

SIR WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I.

LL.D., D.C.L., Ph.D. (Bologna)

AUTHOR OF
"THE LIFE OF MAHOMET" "MAHOMET AND ISLAM"
ETC.

THIRD EDITION

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO.
15 WATERLOO PLACE

DS
236
M93
1898

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THIS volume was at first intended as an abridgment of the First Edition, or *Annals of the Early Caliphate*,[1] with continuation to the fall of the Abbassides; but I found, as I went on, the matter less compressible than I had hoped. The result, therefore, is much larger than I anticipated. I trust, however, that, its length notwithstanding, the narrative may be found not uninteresting; and I now offer it as a contribution towards the history of a period for which there are, as yet, but scanty materials in the English language.

The authorities, excepting for the later portions, are purely Arabian; indeed, for the earlier there are no other. After Tabari who died in the Fourth century A.H., Ibn Athir (*d.* 630 A.H.), a singularly impartial annalist who compiled his work from all available sources, has been my chief guide. Towards the close, and especially for the brief chapter on the Caliphate under the Mameluke dynasty, I have drawn largely on Weil's admirable *Geschichte der Chalifen*,[2] which indeed has been my constant companion throughout. I gratefully acknowledge my obligations to the late Dr. Weil. The more his great history is studied in connection with the original authorities, the more one is impressed with the vast research, the unfailing accuracy, and the dispassionate judgment of the author.

---

[1] Smith & Elder, 1883.

[2] Vols. I.–III. Mannheim, 1846–1851; IV. and V. Stuttgart, 1860–1862.

I should mention here that the materials out of which our story is woven differ entirely from those for the Biography of Mahomet. For that, every incident of his life and every phase of his character, is illustrated by myriads of traditions of all degrees of credibility,—authoritative, uncertain, fabulous,—each tradition separate and independent, generally short and complete in itself. At his death the curtain drops at once upon the lifelike scene. Tradition collapses, and the little that remains is curt and meagre. Of the chief "Companions," indeed, from their connection with the Prophet, we have sufficient notice, and special prominence is given to the lives of the first four Caliphs. But tradition, instead of being, as before, a congeries of separate statements, now assumes the form of connected narrative, and eventually the style of ordinary annals; and though there is now and then an exception, as in the minute and profuse description of such battles as Cadesiya, the Camel, and Siffin, the story as a rule becomes bald and jejune. These annals also are strictly divided by the year, the chapter for each year containing everything belonging to it, and as a rule nothing else. The continuity of subjects extending often over a long series of years is thus broken up, and some inconvenience and difficulty experienced in forming a connected narrative. But upon the whole, the materials are amply sufficient for the historian's purpose.

I may be permitted here to lament the want of any full and standard work in our own language on the Crusades, and on the Mameluke dynasty and its overthrow by the Osmanlies, — chapters not only deeply interesting in themselves, but bound up with the interests of the Eastern Churches, and development of the political relations of Europe, Asia, and Egypt. I venture to express the hope that some worthy pen may supply the want.

The reader will bear in mind that the Moslem year, as purely lunar, is eleven days shorter than the solar, and consequently loses about three years in every cycle of a hundred. The lunar month has also this peculiarity, that while, like the Jewish, the date indicates the age of the moon, the month itself gives no indication of the season of the year. The dates have usually been given throughout according to both the Moslem and the Christian notation.

The Mussulman months, being unfamiliar to the English reader, have been indicated, as I trust in a more intelligible notation, by Roman numerals in the margin thus:—

Moharram	i.	Rajab	vii.
Safar	ii.	Shaban	viii.
Rabi I.	iii.	Ramadhan or Ramzan	ix.
Rabi II.	iv.	Shawwal	x.
Jumad I.	v.	Dzul Cada	xi.
Jumad II.	vi.	Dzul Hijj	xii.

I have not been very strict, and possibly not always consistent, in the rendering of proper names. Received forms have ordinarily been adhered to. As a rule, transliteration of Arabic names has been as follows:—

ث = th
ج = j
ذ = dz
ز = z
ض = dh
ظ = tz
غ = gh
ق = c (*or* k)
ك = k

For the letter ع I have not in the present work assigned any diacritical mark.

W. M.

Edinburgh, *September* 1891.

THIRD EDITION

THIS Third Edition is a simple reproduction of the Second. Occasional amendments have been made throughout. But upon the whole it is the same.

W. M.

EDINBURGH, *December* 1898.

CONTENTS

YEAR PAGE
PREFACES v

CHAPTER I

11 A.H. . . Death of Mahomet.—Election of Abu Bekr.—Omar, Aly, Abu Obeida 1

CHAPTER II

Expedition of Osâma to Syrian border . . . 9

CHAPTER III

Attack of Bedouins on Medina; repelled by Abu Bekr 12

CHAPTER IV

Return of Osâma.—Bedouins chastised.—Expeditions organised against apostate tribes 16

CHAPTER V

Khalid's Arabian campaign.—Toleiha.—Battle of Bozakha.—Oyeina.—Mâlik ibn Noweira.—Yemama.—Moseilama.—Garden of Death . . 19

CHAPTER VI

Apostasy crushed.—Bahrein, Oman, Hejaz, Ibn Madekerib, Ashath.—Freebooter burned to death . 35

CHAPTER VII

Review.—Reclaimed tribes at first sullen.—Enthusiasm kindled by Syrian and Chaldæan campaigns.—Arabs become aristocracy of the world.—Arab slaves set free 43

CHAPTER VIII

12 A.H. . . Mothanna's campaign in Irac.—Joined by Khalid.—Battle of Chains.—River of Blood.—Hira capitulates.—Ain Tamar.—Duma stormed.—Firadh.—Khalid's incognito pilgrimage 48

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER IX

12–13 A.H. . Syrian campaign.—Moslem defeat.—Advance on Yermuk, opposed by Greek army.—Khalid joins from Irac.—Battle of Wacûsa.—Khalid deposed . . 65

CHAPTER X

Irac.—Battle of Babylon.—Mothanna's appeal for reinforcements 79

CHAPTER XI

13 A.H. . . Abu Bekr's death.—Omar nominated by him Caliph . 82

CHAPTER XII

13–14 A.H. . Omar's accession.—Reinforcements for Irac.—Rustem.—Battle of the Bridge.—Abu Obeid's defeat.—Battle of Boweib.—Death of Mothanna . . 89

CHAPTER XIII

14 A.H. . . Syria.—Fall of Damascus.—Church of St. John.—Battle of Fihl.—Jordan reduced 99

CHAPTER XIV

Irac.—Fresh levies.—Sad.—Yezdegird.—Rustem's advance.—Battle of Cadesiya.—Discomfiture of Persian army 109

CHAPTER XV

15–16 A.H. . Hira reoccupied.—Fall of Medain 125

CHAPTER XVI

16 A.H. . . Battle of Jalola.—Omar forbids advance.—Kufa and Bussorah.—Land settlement of Irac . . . 131

CHAPTER XVII

15 A.H. . . Northern Syria, Hims, Antioch.—Heraclius retires . 139

CHAPTER XVIII

Palestine.—Battle of Ajnadein.—Jerusalem submits to Omar.—His visit.—Ordinance of Omar . . 144

CHAPTER XIX

17 A.H. . . Northern Syria and Mesopotamia.—Attack by Greeks and Bedouins.—Beni Iyadh and Taghlib.—Fall of Cæsarea.—Khalid's trial and deposition . . 151

CHAPTER XX

14–15 A.H. . Jews and Christians expelled from Arabia.—Register of Arab tribes.—Civil and military administration.—Coran "collected" 157

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER XXI

18 A.H. . . Famine.—Plague.—Omar visits Syria.—Muavia.—Bilál 164

CHAPTER XXII

19–20 A.H. . Conquest of Egypt.—Alexandria 169

CHAPTER XXIII

16–20 A.H. . Southern Persia.—Sus.—Tomb of Daniel.—Hormuzan 177

CHAPTER XXIV

21–22 A.H. . Conquest of Persia.—Battle of Nehavend.—Flight of Yezdegird 182

CHAPTER XXV

17–23 A.H. . Domestic events.—Court of Kaaba enlarged.—Moghira's trial.—Kufa.—Bussorah.—Era of Hegira.—Laxity of morals.—Omar's simple life . . 187

CHAPTER XXVI

23 A.H. . . Death of Omar.—Appointment of Electors . . 198

CHAPTER XXVII

23–24 A.H. . Othman.—Murder of Hormuzan 204

CHAPTER XXVIII

24–35 A.H. . Arabs and Coreish.—Hashimites and Omeyyads.—Campaigns in East and West.—Naval victory . 210

CHAPTER XXIX

30–34 A.H. . Unpopularity of Othman.—Discontent at Kufa and Bussorah.—Recension of Coran.—Abu Dzarr.—Other causes.—Naila 219

CHAPTER XXX

33–34 A.H. . Growing disaffection.—Outbreak at Kufa.—Aly warns Othman 229

CHAPTER XXXI

34–35 A.H. . Outlook darkens.—Conference of Governors.—Muavia's help declined 235

CHAPTER XXXII

35 A.H. . . Conspirators attack Medina.—Palace besieged.—Othman slain 238

CHAPTER XXXIII

35–36 A.H. . Election of Aly.—Excitement at Damascus.—War proclaimed against Muavia 248

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER XXXIV

36 A.H. . . Ayesha at Mecca.—Joined by Talha and Zobeir.—They seize Bussorah 255

CHAPTER XXXV

Aly's advance on Bussorah.—Battle of the Camel.—Talha and Zobeir killed.—Ayesha retires to Medina 261

CHAPTER XXXVI

Kufa seat of Government.—Egypt.—Muavia at Damascus threatens regicides 268

CHAPTER XXXVII

36–37 A.H. . Hostilities beween Aly and Muavia.—Battle of Siffin.—Arbitration.—Abu Musa and Amru, Umpires . 273

CHAPTER XXXVIII

37 A.H. . . Kharejites rebel against Aly.—Yield to him . . 281

CHAPTER XXXIX

Decision of Umpires.—Muavia Caliph at Damascus . 284

CHAPTER XL

Aly marches against Muavia.—Recalled by Kharejite outbreak.—Battle of Nehrwan.—Kharejites . 287

CHAPTER XLI

38 A.H. . . Amru takes Egypt for Muavia 292

CHAPTER XLII

38–40 A.H. . Double Caliphate.—Kharejite risings.—Ziad.—Treaty between Aly and Muavia 295

CHAPTER XLIII

40 A.H. . . Kharejite conspiracy.—Aly assassinated.—Muavia escapes 301

CHAPTER XLIV

40–41 A.H. . Hasan.—Abdicates in favour of Muavia.—Death of Hasan 306

CHAPTER XLV

40–60 A.H. . Muavia sole Caliph.—Death of Amru and Moghira.—Ziad.—Africa; Cairowan.—Attack on Constantinople.—Mahomet's pulpit 309

CHAPTER XLVI

56 A.H. . . Yezid declared Heir-apparent.—Forms a precedent.—Yezid's Bedouin mother 316

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER XLVII

61 A.H. . . Yezid.—Ibn Zobeir at Mecca.—Hosein marches on Kufa.—Tragedy of Kerbala.—Death of Hosein.—The Moharram 321

CHAPTER XLVIII

61–64 A.H. . Alyite reaction.—Ibn Zobeir affects Caliphate.—Mecca besieged.—Death of Yezid 329

CHAPTER XLIX

64–73 A.H. . Muavia II.—Merwan.—Abd al Melik.—Tribal hostilities.—Mukhtar seizes Kufa.—Slays "Murderers" of Hosein.—Musab beaten.—Kufa gained.—Hajjâj storms Mecca.—Ibn Zobeir's death 332

CHAPTER L

73–86 A.H. . Abd al Melik (continued).—Hajjâj.—Azrackites.—Mohallab.—Ibn al Ashath.—Wasit.—Mint.—Ibn Khazim 347

CHAPTER LI

86–96 A.H. . Welid.—Omar at Medina.—Death of Hajjâj.—Coteiba.—Khorasan.—Multan.—India.—Africa.—Spain.—Fall of Musa.—Glory of Welid . . . 359

CHAPTER LII

96–99 A.H. . Soleiman.—Khorasan.—Coteiba's rebellion.—Yezid.—Attack on Constantinople 376

CHAPTER LIII

99–101 A.H. Omar II.—Fall of Yezid.—Efforts at conversion . 381

CHAPTER LIV

101–105 A.H. Yezid II.—Yezid's rebellion.—Narbonne.—Hashimite canvass.—Collectors of tradition 386

CHAPTER LV

105–125 A.H. Hisham.—Hashimites; Alyites and Abbassides.—Kufa.—Yusuf.—Zeid.—Central Asia.—India.—Armenia.—Africa.—France.—Charles Martel.—Just reign 393

CHAPTER LVI

125–126 A.H. Welid II.—Yezid III.—Khorasan.—Nasr.—Abbasside canvass.—Merwan's advance.—Compromise.—Death of Yezid III 412

CHAPTER LVII

126–130 A.H. Ibrahim.—Merwan II.—Ibn Muavia.—Soleiman.—Dhahhak.—Kharejites.—Spain slips from Caliphate 418

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER LVIII

130–132 A.H. Merwan II (continued).—Abbassides in Khorasan.—Abu Muslim.—Nasr's flight.—Kufa taken by Abbassides.—Battle of Zab.—Merwan's death . 426

CHAPTER LIX

132–656 A.H. Abbasside Dynasty.—General features . . . 435

CHAPTER LX

132–136 A.H. Abul Abbas.—Hâshimiya.—Persecution of Omeyyads.—Ibn Hobeira.—Abu Muslim's pilgrimage . . 438

CHAPTER LXI

136–158 A.H. Abu Jafar, Mansûr.—Abu Muslim put to death.—Rawendies.—Khorasan, Mehdy.—Ibrahim's rebellion.—Bagdad.—Omeyyads in Spain.—Barmecides.—Pilgrimage.—Literature . . . 448

CHAPTER LXII

158–169 A.H. Mehdy.—Growing laxity.—Manichæans.—War with Greece 469

CHAPTER LXIII

169–193 A.H. Hâdy.—Harun al Rashid.—Nicephorus.—Fall of Barmecides.—Harun dies at Tus.—Glory of his reign 475

CHAPTER LXIV

193–198 A.H. Amîn.—Mamun.—Bagdad besieged.—Tâhir and Harthama.—Death of Amîn 489

CHAPTER LXV

198–218 A.H. Mamun (continued).—Alyite predilections.—Bagdad revolts.—Aly-ridha.—Ibrahim rival Caliph.—Mamun at Bagdad.—Tahirides.—Babek.—Heterodoxy.—Brilliant reign 498

CHAPTER LXVI

218–232 A.H. Motassim.—Turkish soldiery.—Samira.—Babek.—Amorium.—Wâthic.—Heterodoxy.—Ahmed the Martyr 515

CHAPTER LXVII

232–247 A.H. Motawakkil.—Return to Orthodoxy.—Ordinance against Jews and Christians.—Saffarides.—Assassination 526

CHAPTER LXVIII

247–256 A.H. Muntassir.—Mustain.—Rebellion.—Siege of Bagdad.—Mutazz.—Wassif and Bogha.—Ahmed ibn Tulun.—Mohtady.—Riot at Bagdad . . . 534

YEAR PAGE

CHAPTER LXIX

56–279 A.H. Motamid and Mowaffac.—Zenj rebellion.—Saffarides.—Tulunide Dynasty 547

CHAPTER LXX

79–295 A.H. Motadhid.—Muktafy.—Egypt.—War with Greeks . 556

CHAPTER LXXI

Ismailians and Carmathians. — Fatimide Dynasty.—Druses.—Assassins 560

CHAPTER LXXII

295–329 A.H. Muctadir.—Cahir.—Radhy 568

CHAPTER LXXIII

329–334 A.H. Muttaky.—Hamadan Chiefs.—Ikshidites.—Mustakfy.—Buyides 575

CHAPTER LXXIV

334–447 A.H. Buyide Dynasty. — Mutie, Taie, Cadir, and Caim, Caliphs 580

CHAPTER LXXV

447–575 A.H. Bagdad under Seljuks.—Toghril Beg.—Muctady and four following Caliphs.—Crusades.—Capture of Jerusalem.—End of Fatimides 584

CHAPTER LXXVI

575–640 A.H. Nasir, his Son and Grandson. — Kharizm Shah. — Jenghiz Khan 591

CHAPTER LXXVII

640–656 A.H. Mustassim, last of the Caliphs.—Holagu takes Bagdad.—Caliph put to death.—End of Abbasside Dynasty 595

CHAPTER LXXVIII

659–926 A.H. Spurious Caliphate under Mameluke Kings of Egypt.—Osmanly Conquest 599

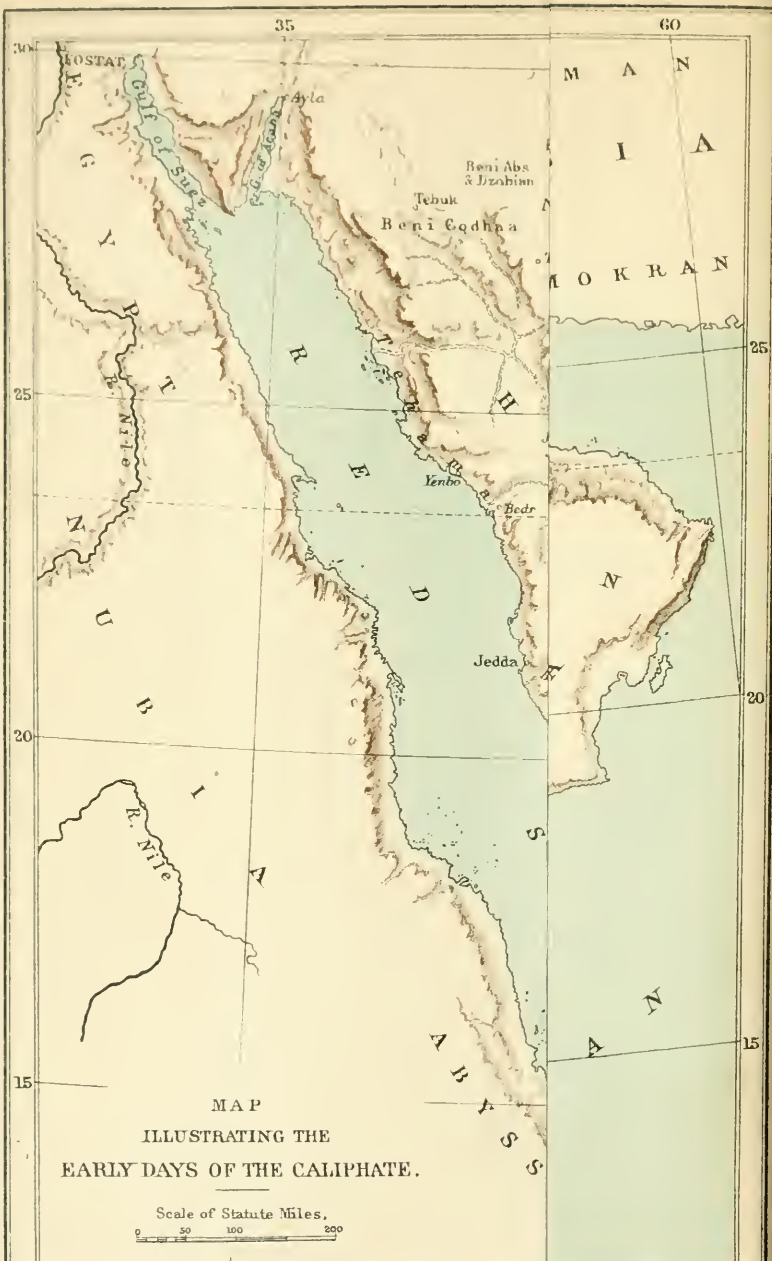
CHAPTER LXXIX

Review 603

INDEX 611

MAPS

1. ARABIA . . . . *to face page* 1
2. SYRIA AND IRAN . . . . ,, 48
3. ASIA MINOR, PERSIA, AND KHORASAN . . . ,, 309


35
60
30
FOSTAT
EGYPT
NUBIA
Gulf of Suez
G. of Akaba
Ayla
MAN
IA
Beni Abs
& Dzobian
Tebuk
Beni Codhaa
MOKRAN
25
R. Nile
RED SEA
Tehama
Yenbo
Bedr
HEDJAZ
N
Jedda
20
R. Nile
ABYSSINIA
AN
15
0
50
100
200
35

MAP
ILLUSTRATING THE
EARLY DAYS OF THE CALIPHATE.

Scale of Statute Miles.

anford's Geographical Establishment.

THE CALIPHATE:

ITS RISE, DECLINE, AND FALL

CHAPTER I

DEATH OF MAHOMET, ELECTION OF ABU BEKR

11 A.H. 632 A.D.

Death of Mahomet, 13 Rabi I. 11 A.H. 8th June 632 A.D.

was Midsummer in the year 632 of our era when e Prophet of Arabia passed away. He had been ten ars at Medina, for it was now the eleventh year of the egira, that is of the Flight from Mecca. Mahomet had ached the age of threescore years and three; and up to e time of his last illness which lasted but thirteen days, d been hale and vigorous. His death thus fell an un- pected shock upon Medina.

Abu Bekr absent.

For some days before, a burning fever had weakened m grievously and confined him to his bed. All through nday of the fatal week, he lay prostrate and at times lirious. Monday morning brought temporary relief. was the hour of early prayer, and the worshippers had sembled in the Square or court of the great Mosque, joining the chamber of Ayesha in which she had been nderly nursing her husband throughout his illness. eeling stronger that morning, he rose from the couch, ew aside the curtain from the door, and moved softly to the Court, where Abu Bekr (as commissioned by m when laid aside) was conducting the service in

A.H. 11.

his place. When prayers were ended Abu Bekr, seeing his Master to all appearance better, obtained leave to visit his wife who lived in the Upper suburb of the city. After he had left, the Prophet having spoken a few kindly words to his Aunt and others crowding around him, was helped back into the chamber. Exhausted by the effort, his strength sank, and shortly after he breathed his last on the bosom of his favourite wife.

Abu Bekr's return; scene in court of Mosque.

It was yet but little after midday. Rumour spreading, the Mosque was soon crowded with a host of bewildered followers. Amongst them was Omar who arose, and in a wild and excited strain declaimed that the Prophet was not dead but in a trance, from which he would soon arise and root out the hypocrites from the land. Abu Bekr had by this time hurried back. He crossed the Court not heeding his impetuous friend, and entered into Ayesha's chamber. Stooping down he kissed the Prophet's face. "Sweet wert thou," he said, "in life, and sweet thou art in death." Then he went forth, and finding Omar still haranguing the people, put him aside with the memorable words:—*Whoso worshippeth Mahomet, let him know that Mahomet is dead; but whoso worshippeth God, let him know that God liveth and dieth not.* So saying, he recited certain verses from the Coran, which no doubt had long dwelt upon his mind, as signifying that Mahomet was mortal and would die as other Prophets had died before him. Recognising the sacred words to bear a meaning that had never struck him before, Omar was speechless. "My limbs trembled," he would say when speaking of that memorable hour, "and I knew of a certainty that Mahomet was dead indeed."

Men of Medina meet to elect a chief.

The assembly in the court of the Mosque had now quieted down, when a messenger ran up breathless with a report that the men of Medina had assembled to choose a ruler from amongst themselves. The moment was critical. The unity of the Faith was at stake. A divided power would fall to pieces, and all might be lost. The mantle of the Prophet must fall upon one Successor, and on one alone. The sovereignty of Islam demanded an undivided Caliphate; and Arabia would acknowledge no master but from amongst the Coreish. The die must be cast, and cast at once. Such, no doubt, were the thoughts that occurred to the two chief Companions of the Prophet on hearing this report; and so, accompanied by Abu Obeida another leading Chief, they hurried to the spot, if haply they might nip the conspiracy in the bud. On the way two friendly Citizens coming from the excited conclave, warned them of the risk they ran in entering it alone; but notwithstanding they hastened on. The men of Medina meanwhile, gathered in one of their rude Halls, were bent upon an independent course. "We have sheltered this nest of strangers," they cried. "It is by our good swords they have been able to plant the Faith. The Ruler of Medina shall be from amongst ourselves." They had already fixed their choice on Sad ibn Obâda leader of the Beni Khazraj, who sick of a fever lay covered up at the farther end of the Hall, when the three Companions entered. It was just in time; for had the Citizens elected Sad and pledged their troth to him, Medina might have been irretrievably compromised. Omar with his native vehemence, was about to speak, when Abu Bekr, calm and firm, anticipated him thus:—"Every word," said he, "which ye, men of Medina, have uttered in your own praise is true, and more than true; but in noble birth and influence the Coreish are paramount, and to none but them will Arabia yield obedience." "Then," cried they, "let there be one Chief amongst you and one from amongst us." "Away with you!" exclaimed Omar, "two cannot stand together"; and even Sad from beneath his covering muttered that to divide the power would only weaken it. High words ensued. Hobâb, at the side of Sad, cried out, "Hear him not! Attend to me, for I am the *well-rubbed Palm-stem*.[1] If they refuse, expel them from the city." "The Lord destroy thee!" cried Omar; and Hobâb returned the words. The altercation gaining heat and bitterness, Abu Bekr saw it must be stopped at any risk, and stepping forward said,

Met by Abu Bekr, Omar, and Abu Obeida.

---

[1] Meaning a palm-trunk left for the beasts to come and rub themselves upon; metaphor for a person much resorted to for counsel.

A.H. 11.

"Ye see these two," pointing to Omar and Abu Obeida. "Choose ye now which of them ye will, and salute him as your Chief." "Nay," answered they both at once, "*Thou* hast already at the Prophet's bidding, led the Prayers; thou art our Chief. Stretch forth thine hand." He did so, and they struck their hand on his (as is the Arab custom) in token of allegiance. Others were about to follow their example, when Hobâb cried to one of the Beni Khazraj about to take the pledge, "Wilt thou cut thine own kinsman's throat?" "Not so," the person thus addressed replied; "I only yield the right to whom the right is due." Whilst they yet hesitated, the Beni Aus jealous of the rival tribe and of Sad its chief, spake among themselves:—"If this man be chosen, the rule will be for ever with the Beni Khazraj. Let us at once salute Abu Bekr as our Chief." The example set, group after group advanced to strike their hand on that of Abu Bekr, till none was left but Sad who still lay covered in the corner. Acknowledged thus by the men of Medina, there could be no doubt of Abu Bekr's acceptance by the Meccan "Refugees." He was not only one of themselves, but the Prophet when laid aside, by appointing Abu Bekr to take his place at the daily prayers, had in a manner already indicated him as his Vicegerent. And so homage was done on all sides to Abu Bekr. He was saluted as the CALIPH,[1] or *Successor* of the Prophet.

Abu Bekr elected Caliph.

Burial of the Prophet.

The night passed in preparing the dead for sepulture. The body was washed and laid out, and the grave dug in Ayesha's apartment where Mahomet had breathed his last. On the morrow the Citizens, men, women and children, thronged the chamber to look once more upon their Prophet's face. And then the remains were reverently committed to the dust.

Abu Bekr's inaugural address.

The funeral over, and the court of the great Mosque still crowded with the mourners, Abu Bekr ascended the pulpit and, sitting down, was acknowledged CALIPH by acclamation. Then he arose and said:—"Oh people! "Now I am Ruler over you, albeit not the best amongst you. If I do well, support me; if ill, then set me right. Follow the True, wherein is faithfulness; eschew the False, wherein is treachery. The weaker amongst you shall be as the stronger with me, until that I shall have redressed his wrong; and the stronger shall be as the weaker until, if the Lord will, I shall have taken from him that which he hath wrested. Leave not off to fight in the ways of the Lord; whosoever leaveth off, him verily shall the Lord abase. Obey me as I obey the Lord and his Prophet; wherein I disobey, obey me not. Now arise to prayer, and the Lord be with you!" The assembly stood p for prayer and Abu Bekr, for the first time as Caliph, lled the place of Mahomet.[1]

---

[1] In Arabic, *Khaleefa.*

Aly delays doing homage.

The supreme power thus passed, without let or hindrance, nto the hands of Abu Bekr. Sad ibn Obâda chagrined at eing superseded, held aloof. Aly is also said to have efrained from doing homage till after the death of Fatima is wife. The Alyite party pretend that he looked to the aliphate himself. But there is nothing in his previous life, r in the attitude of the Prophet towards him, that warrants ny such surmise. He had indeed a grievance, but of uite a different kind. The day after her father's death, atima preferred a claim to his share in the crown lands f Kheibar. Abu Bekr disallowed the claim; holding hat the revenues were destined, as Mahomet had himself esired, for purposes of State. Fatima took the denial so nuch to heart that she held altogether aloof from the aliph during the short remainder of her life. And hence was only after her death that Aly recognised with any ordiality the title of Abu Bekr to the Caliphate.[2] Fatima

Fatima mother of Hasan and Hosein.

---

[1] Presidency at public prayer was ever in Islam the sign of chief command, hether in civil or in military life.

[2] Tradition regarding Aly is coloured and distorted by the canvass of a olitical faction which in the end assumed the *divine* right of succession as ested in Aly and his descendants. There is not a shadow of proof that Aly imself ever made any claim of the kind, or that any such claim was made y others for him during the Caliphates of Abu Bekr and Omar. It was not ll the election of a successor on the death of Omar that he became a candiate, and even then his claim was grounded on being one of the chief Companions rather than on any supposed right in virtue of his relationship to ahomet by marriage with his daughter.

A.H. 11.

was the last surviving child of Mahomet. His other three daughters, two of whom had in succession married Othman, were already some time dead. Khadija had borne him two sons, but both died in infancy at Mecca. A third, the only other son the Prophet ever had, was born at Medina by the slave-girl Mary, and died sixteen months old. No issue of the Prophet thus survived in the male line. But two grandsons, Hasan and Hosein, were left by his daughter Fatima. They were now but six or seven years of age.

How far Abu Bekr's election formed a precedent.

With Mahomet ceased the theocratic power; but his kingly functions, as ruler over all Islam, descended. According to Arabian notions, the leader of a nation, like the Chieftain of a tribe, is the head and representative of his people, and the nomination remains invalid till confirmed by their homage. Omar, in after days, held that the irregular election of Abu Bekr (referring apparently to the scene enacted in the Hall) should not be a precedent. It was, he said, an event the happiest in its consequences for Islam, but justified only by the urgency of the moment. What might have been the issue if any son of Mahomet had survived it is useless now to speculate. But certainly the hereditary descent of kingly power was foreign to the sentiment of Arabia. As matters stood, Mahomet seems to have shrunk from anticipating the contingency of his own death, and had made no preparation for what might follow. But in so far as we may suppose him to have fel his illness mortal and death impending, the nomination o Abu Bekr to conduct the public Prayers (acknowledge mark of chief or delegated authority) may be held th natural indication of a wish that he should succeed. Apart from the pretensions of the men of Medina, whic immediately died away, there was in the election neithe doubt nor hesitancy. The notion of divine right, or eve of preferential claim, resting in the Prophet's family, wa the growth of an altogether later age.

Parties at Medina.

It may be necessary here to recall to the reader no fresh from the study of the Prophet's life, the state

---

[1] See *Life of Mahomet*, p. 499.

A.H. 11.

parties at the present juncture. The *Men of Medina* were the old inhabitants of the City who had received Mahomet on his escape from Mecca, and supported his cause;[1] they now embraced practically the whole *native* population of Medina, since the party that opposed him on his first arrival had gradually succumbed before his growing power. They were divided into two tribes, the *Beni Aus* and *Beni Khazraj*, jealous of each other as we have seen. Beside these were the *Refugees*, those namely who had followed Mahomet in exile from Mecca or elsewhere, and were now settled at Medina. Again, *Companion* was a title of honour given to all those who had enjoyed the special friendship of the Prophet. A few words may also be added here to revive the reader's recollection of the three Companions who turned the scale at the election of the Caliph.

Abu Bekr.

Abu Bekr, threescore years of age, was somewhat short in stature, of spare frame, rounded back, and stooping gait. His face thin smooth and fair, nose aquiline and sharp, forehead high, eyes deep seated and far apart. His hair scanty; the beard, for many years white, now dyed red. His countenance still in old age handsome; the expression mild, but wise and resolute. To him faith in the Prophet had become a second nature and, now that his Master was gone, the disciple lived but to fulfil his will. It was this that nerved a disposition naturally soft and yielding, and made Abu Bekr, of all the followers of Mahomet, the truest, firmest, and most resolute.

Omar.

Omar, fifteen years younger, differed from Abu Bekr both in frame and temperament. Broad shouldered and tall, he towered above the crowd. Somewhat dark in complexion, the face was fresh and ruddy. His head was now bald; the beard dyed like his friend's; his stride long and his presence commanding. Naturally hasty and passionate, he would twist his moustache when angry and draw it downwards to his mouth. But time had mellowed temper; and, beneath an imperious manner, he was bland and courteous. Attachment to Mahomet had, on these two friends, an effect exactly opposite. That which braced

---

[1] Hence called *Ansâr*, or Helpers.

A.H. 11.

the soft nature of Abu Bekr, served but to abate the vehemence of Omar. Both stood in a like relation to the Prophet. Haphsa, Omar's daughter, was one of Mahomet's favourite wives; but Ayesha, the child of Abu Bekr, was Queen in his affections to the end.

Abu Obeida.

On these two men at this moment hung the future of Islam. The third, Abu Obeida, was between them in age. Thin, tall, and sinewy, he was bald and with little beard. Mild, unassuming and unwarlike, Abu Obeida was yet destined to take a leading part in the conquest of Syria.

CHAPTER II

EXPEDITION TO SYRIAN BORDER

11 A.H. 632 A.D.

Syrian expedition, 11 A.H. 632 A.D.

ABU BEKR had soon an occasion for showing his resolve to carry out to the utmost the will of Mahomet in things both great and small.

Osâma appointed by Mahomet to command the force.

Just before he fell sick, the Prophet had given orders for an expedition to the Syrian border. It was to avenge the disaster which three years before had befallen the Moslem arms on the field of Muta. In that reverse, Zeid, the bosom friend of Mahomet, who led the army, fell; and so, distinctly to mark the object of the expedition, his son Osâma, though still young, was nominated by Mahomet to the command, and bidden to avenge his father's death. The camp, including all available fighting men, had been formed at Jorf, a little way outside Medina on the Syrian road. During the Prophet's sickness the force remained inactive there, uncertain of the issue. When the fatal event took place, Osâma broke up the camp, and carrying back the banner received at the hands of Mahomet, planted it in the court of the great Mosque, close by the door of Ayesha's apartment.

Abu Bekr deaf to reclamations against its despatch.

The day following his inauguration, Abu Bekr took up the banner, and restoring it to Osâma, in token that he was still commander, bade the army again assemble and encamp at Jorf as it had done before; not a man was to be left behind. Obeying his command, the fighting men of Medina and its neighbourhood all flocked to the camp, even Omar amongst the number. While yet preparing to depart, the horizon darkened suddenly. Report of the

A.H. 11.

Prophet's illness, soon followed by tidings of his death, had spread like wildfire over the land. From every side came rumours of disloyalty, and of resolve to cast the yoke of Islam off. The sense of the army, and of Osâma himself, was strongly against leaving the City thus defenceless, and the Caliph exposed to risk of sudden danger. Omar was deputed to represent all this to Abu Bekr, and also to urge (a request which Mahomet already had refused) that, if the expedition must proceed, a more experienced general should command. To the first request Abu Bekr replied, calm and unmoved:—"Were the City swarming round with "packs of ravening wolves and I left solitary and alone, the "force should go; not a word from my Master's lips shall "fall to the ground." At the second demand the Caliph's anger kindled:—"Thy mother be childless, O son of Khattâb!" he said, seizing Omar by the beard:—"Shall "the Prophet of the Lord appoint a man to the command "and I, deposing him, appoint another in his place?" So Omar returned, with neither object gained.

He accompanies Osâma a little way on foot,

When all was ready for the march, Abu Bekr repaired to the camp, and accompanied the force a little way on foot. "Be mounted," said Osâma to him, "or else I will dismount and walk by thee." "Not so," replied Abu Bekr; "I will not mount; I will walk and soil my feet a little "moment in the ways of the Lord. Verily, every step "trodden in the ways of the Lord is equal to the merit of "manifold good works and wipeth out a multitude of sins." After a while he stopped, and said to Osâma:—"If it be thy will, give Omar leave that he may return for strength and counsel with me to the city." So he gave him leave.

And gives his last instructions.

The army then halted, to receive Abu Bekr's parting words. "See," said he, addressing Osâma, "that thou beware of treachery. Depart not in any wise from the right. Thou shalt mutilate none; neither shalt thou kill child or aged man, nor any woman. Injure not the date-palm, neither burn it with fire; and cut not down any tree wherein is food for man or beast. Slay not of the flocks or herds or camels, saving for needful sustenance. Ye

A.H. 11.

ay eat of the meat which men of the land shall ing unto you in their vessels, making mention thereon the name of the Lord. And the Monks with shaven ads, if they submit, leave them unmolested. Now arch forward in the name of the Lord, and may He rotect you from sword and pestilence!"

Osâma returns victorious.

So Abu Bekr returned with Omar to Medina. Osâma arched by Wadi al Cora, in the direction of Duma and e highlands south of Syria. The brunt of his attack ll upon the Beni Codhâa and the semi-Christian tribes hich under the Roman banner had discomfited and slain is father, a disaster now avenged in fire and blood. The nd was ravaged far and near; and, after an absence of wo months, the army, laden with spoil, was joyfully wel- omed back.

Meanwhile stirring events had been transpiring at edina.

CHAPTER III

MEDINA THREATENED

11 A.H. 632 A.D.

Effect of Abu Bekr's action; iv.-v. 11 A.H. June-July 632 A.D.

IN after-days Abu Bekr was used to look back with just pride upon having despatched Osâma's force the universal reclamation notwithstanding. Public opinion was not long in justifying the act. His bold front struck the Bedouin mind with the stability of his rule. If the leaders at Medina had not been confident in strength at home they would not have sent away their army; and the Arabs reasoning thus, were restrained from much that they might otherwise have done. Still the position was critical, and at times alarming.

His courageous attitude.

It was indeed a thing for the brave old Caliph to be proud of. "The Arabs," we read, "were on all sides "rising in rebellion. Apostasy and disaffection raised "their heads; Christians and Jews began to stretch out their "necks; and the Faithful were as a flock of sheep without "a shepherd, their Prophet gone, their numbers few, their "foes a multitude." In face of all this Abu Bekr had sent away beyond recall his only force, and left Medina open and apparently defenceless.

Insurrection throughout Arabia.

There was danger all around, for towards the close of Mahomet's life, three rivals laying claim to the prophetic office had already raised the standard of rebellion. In the south, insurrection was hardly quelled by the death of the "Veiled Prophet" of Yemen,[1] when, on tidings of the decease of Mahomet, it burst forth again with redoubled violence. Northwards in the centre of the

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 463.

A.H. 11.

ninsula, Moseilama had detached the powerful tribes ound Yemama from their allegiance. And to the north- st, nearer home, Toleiha the third Pretender, had become enly and dangerously hostile. From every quarter, in pid succession, came news of spreading disaffection. he Collectors of tithe (an impost hateful to the Bedouin), e Legates and Residents of Mahomet throughout the rovinces,—all, in fact, who represented the authority of slam, fled or were expelled. The Faithful wherever und were massacred, some of the confessors suffering cruel death. Mecca and Tayif wavered at the first; ut in the end, through the strong influence of the oreish, stood firm. They were almost alone. Here nd there some few tribes, under loyal, or it might be mporising Chiefs, maintained the semblance of obedi- nce; but they were hardly discernible amidst the eething mass of rebellion. Amru, hurrying back from)man (whither he had been sent as an Ambassador by Iahomet at the Farewell Pilgrimage) saw, as he passed, he whole of Central Arabia either in open apostasy or eady to break away on the first demand of tithe; and is report filled the Citizens of Medina with dismay. In ruth, Islam had never taken firm hold of the distant rovinces; and as for the Bedouins, Mahomet himself ad frequent cause to chide their fickleness. It was fear f punishment, and lust of plunder under the Prophet's anner, rather than attachment to the Faith, which hitherto had held in check these wild Sons of the desert. The restraints and obligations of Islam were ever irksome and distasteful; and now rid of them, they were again returning to their lawless life.

Danger of Medina.

As report after report came in of fresh defection, Abu Bekr could but instruct his scattered officers, wherever they were able, to hold together the loyal few, bravely trusting to tide over the crisis until Osâma's force returned. For the immediate defence of Medina he took such measures as were possible. The faithful tribes in the neighbourhood were called in, and pickets posted at the various approaches to the City. The turbulent clans

A.H. 11. in the near desert were the first to assume a threatening attitude. The Beni Abs and Dzobian massed there in such numbers "that the land was straitened by them," and they parted into two bodies, one to Rabadza, the other to Dzul Cassa, the first station from Medina on the road to Nejd. The false prophet Toleiha sent his brother to encourage the insurgents: but they still vacillated between his claims and those of Islam. At last they bethought themselves of a compromise. A deputation offered to hold by Islam and its ritual, if only they were excused the tithe. The strangers bearing this message were welcomed by the chiefs of Medina, but by the Caliph their advances were indignantly rejected. He would relax not a tittle of the legal dues. "If ye withhold but the tether of a tithed camel," said Abu Bekr sharply, "I will fight you for it." With this refusal they retired, and also with the intelligence that the City had but few defenders left. Now was the moment, not for plunder only, but for a decisive blow upon Medina. Abu Bekr foreseeing this redoubled his precautions. He strengthened the pickets, and set over them the only three chief men remaining with him, Aly, Talha, and Zobeir. For the people at large he appointed the great Mosque a rendezvous. "The land hath rebelled against us," he said, "and they have spied out our nakedness and the weakness of our defence. Ye know not whether they will "come upon you by night or come upon you by day, or "which of you may be first attacked. Wherefore be ye "vigilant and ready."

Attack repelled.

And so it came to pass. They tarried but three days, when a surprise was attempted from Dzul Cassa. The outposts were on the alert and kept the assailants at bay, while the main-guard was hurried up on camels from the Mosque. The Bedouins, hardly prepared for so warm a reception, fled back upon their reserves. They were pursued; but the insurgents, blowing out their water-skins, cast them, thus inflated, before the camels of the Moslems, which unused to the stratagem took fright and fled back to the Mosque. None were killed or wounded, but the Rebels

A.H. 11.

re emboldened by the discomfiture. Abu Bekr anti- pating renewed attack, called out every man capable of aring arms, and spent the night in marshalling his force. ext morning while yet dark, he led forth the little band mself in regular array with centre and two wings. The emy were taken by surprise at early dawn, and as the n arose were already in full flight. Abu Bekr drove em with slaughter out of Dzul Cassa and, leaving a rtion of his little force as an outpost there, returned to edina.

Good effect of the victory.

The affair was small, but the effect was great. As ilure would have been disastrous perhaps fatal to Islam, was victory the turning-point in its favour. The power the Prophet's Successor to protect the City even with- ut an army was noised abroad. And soon after, the irits of the Moslems rose as they saw some Chiefs appear inging in the tithes. The tribes whom these represented ere indeed few compared with the apostate hordes; but was an augury of brighter days. The first thus to pre- nt their legal offerings to the Caliph were deputations om the Beni Temîm and Beni Tay. Each was ushered to his presence as an Embassy. “Nay,” said Abu Bekr, they are more than that; they are Messengers of glad tidings, true men, and defenders of the Faith.” And the eople answered:—“Even so; now the good things that thou didst promise do appear.”

Saving of Islam due to Abu Bekr.

Tradition delights to ascribe with pious gratitude the reservation of Islam to the aged Caliph's faith and for- tude. “On the death of Mahomet” (so runs our record), it wanted but little and the Faithful had perished utterly. But the Lord strengthened the heart of Abu Bekr, and stablished us thereby in the resolve to give place not for one moment to the Apostates;—giving answer to them but in these three words, *Submission*, *Exile*, or *the Sword*.” t was the simple faith of Abu Bekr which fitted him for he task, and made him carry out the law of his Master o the letter. But for him Islam would have melted away n compromise with the Bedouin tribes, or, likelier still, ave perished in the throes of birth.

CHAPTER IV

RETURN OF OSÂMA. EXPEDITION SENT AGAINST THE APOSTATE TRIBES THROUGHOUT ARABIA

11 A.H. 632 A.D.

Osâma's return. vi. 11 A.H. Sept. 362 A.D.

OSÂMA at last returned, his army laden with booty; and Medina, for two months unprotected, was at once relieved from further danger. The royal Fifth (portion of the booty reserved by sacred ordinance for the State) was delivered to the Caliph, and by him distributed among the people.

Expedition against Beni Abs and Dzobian.

Abu Bekr lost no time in now following up the advantage he had already gained over the insurgents. Driven back from Dzul Cassa, they had retired to Rabadza and vented their anger in destroying by cruel deaths some faithful followers of the Prophet still left amongst them there. Deeply moved at their fate, Abu Bekr took an oath "that he would by the like death destroy as many "of them as they had slain, or even more."

Abu Bekr chastises rebel tribes at Rabadza.

Leaving Osâma in command of the City and also o the army left there for a little to recruit, Abu Bekr with a small force marched out towards Rabadza. The chie men expostulated against his going forth to fight in person Were a Commander killed in action, his place could easily be filled; but if the Caliph fell, their head and master would be gone. "Nay," replied Abu Bekr; "but I wil "go forth, and will be your comrade even as one of your "own selves." So they marched on, and coming up with the enemy completely discomfited them, killing some and taking others prisoners. The Beni Abs and Dzobian fled to Toleiha, and joined his army at Bozâkha. There

A.H. 11.

upon Abu Bekr confiscated their pasture-lands to be in all time to come, a reserve for the stud and camels of the State. The rebels after a time tendered their submission, and eventually found ample compensation in the conquered lands beyond Arabia.

Islam must be reimposed on all Arabia.

Satisfied with this success, the Caliph returned to Medina. The army by this time was refitted. The tithes had begun to come in from neighbouring tribes in token of submission. Medina was no longer in peril, and the Citizens breathed freely. But a heavy burden still lay upon the Caliph. Save a remnant here and there, faith was vanishing, and the Arabs throughout the Peninsula were relapsing into apostasy. Yet Islam was to be the Faith of all Arabia;—"Throughout the land there shall be no second creed," was the behest of Mahomet upon his deathbed. False prophets must be crushed; rebels vanquished; apostates reclaimed or else exterminated; and the supremacy vindicated of Islam. It was, in short, the mission of Abu Bekr to redeem the dying Prophet's words.

Eleven expeditions despatched to different parts of Arabia.

With this great purpose, Abu Bekr went forth a second time to Dzul Cassa, and summoned there the whole available forces of Islam and all the loyal Chieftains. These he divided into eleven independent Columns, and over each appointed a distinguished leader, to whom (following the example of his Master) he presented a banner. Arabia was parcelled out, and each detachment given a quarter to reclaim, with marching orders where to begin and what course to take. Thus Khalid was to subdue Toleiha; and Ikrima with Shorahbîl, Moseilama. Mohajir was sent to Yemen; Ala to Bahrein; Hodzeifa to Mahra; and Amru against the Beni Codhaa. By this great scheme, in course of time no spot would be left unconquered. The troops retained at home were few; but few were needed now.

Proclamation to apostates to repent. viii. 11 A.H. Oct. 632 A.D.

Having despatched the various expeditions, Abu Bekr returned to Medina. There his first concern was to publish a summons to Apostate tribes, commanding them everywhere to repent and submit themselves, on which condition they should be pardoned and received back into Islam. Such as refused would be attacked, their fighting

A.H. 11.

men cut to pieces and their women and children taken captive. This summons was sent by the hand of Envoys to every province and rebellious tribe. The Adzân, or Call to prayer, was to be the test of faith: if that were heard and responded to, good and well; if not, the people were to be held as apostate and punished to the bitter end.

Abu Bekr never again went forth to fight.

Abu Bekr never again left Medina to lead his troops. Some say that he regretted this; but it is not likely that he did. Medina, the Capital, was his proper place. From it, as a central point, he was able to direct the movement of his Commanders all over the Peninsula; and with operations in so many different quarters to control, he could not have been better placed.

No chief Companion appointed to a command.

It is not quite so clear why he appointed none of the more distinguished Companions to any chief command. The same was afterwards the policy of Omar who used to say that he refrained from doing so, partly because the liability to render an account would have implied subjection inconsistent with their dignity, but chiefly to strengthen his own hands by having them about him to advise. This latter reason no doubt also weighed with Abu Bekr, who used to take counsel on all important matters with the leading Companions. Still, it is singular that men like Aly and Zobeir, so prominent in the battles of Mahomet, should now for the moment disappear from operations in the field.

CHAPTER V

RECOVERY OF ARABIA. CAMPAIGN OF KHALID

11 A.H. 632–633 A.D.

The struggle of a year for Arabia's recovery.

It was indeed time for decisive action. But a few weeks before and the entire Peninsula was submissive to the claims of Mahomet both as Prophet and King. Now all was on a sudden changed, and the Arabs abjuring Islam were fast relapsing into apostasy and independence. It took a year to reclaim the Peninsula, a year of hard fighting and obstinate resistance in every corner of the land. It was the indomitable spirit breathed by Mahomet into his faithful followers, that alone crowned their efforts with victory. The Arabs at last were forced back, in sullen mood and with unwilling step, to confess the faith of Mahomet and submit themselves to his Successor.

Details meagre and hazy.

A brief outline of the twelvemonths' campaign will suffice; for tradition, up to the Prophet's death clear and copious, now suddenly becomes curt, obscure, and disconnected. The scene of confusion that prevailed throughout the land, presents itself to us in meagre, dim, and hazy outline. With Islam struggling thus for very life, its followers thought at the moment only of the lance and sword; and when the struggle at last was over, little remained but the sense of escape from a terrible danger. No date is given for the many battles fought throughout the year. We can only guess at the sequence of events.

Such being the case, we shall begin with the campaign of Khalid on the north and east, and then take up the other Provinces in order, as they lie around the coast, from Bahrein on the Persian Gulf to Yemen on the Red Sea.

A.H. 11.

Campaign of Khalid

I. *Against Toleiha*

Khalid ibn Welîd.

After Abu Bekr and Omar, the most prominent figure in the early days of Islam is without doubt that of Khalid son of Welîd. More to him than to any other is it due that the Faith so rapidly recovered its standing, and thereafter spread with such marvellous rapidity. A dashing soldier, brave even to rashness, his courage was tempered by a cool and ready judgment. His conduct on the battlefields which decided the fate of the Persian Empire, and of the Byzantine rule in Syria, ranks him as one of the greatest Generals of the world. Over and again, always with consummate skill and heroism, he cast the die in crises where loss would have been destruction to Islam. From the carnage of his arms he was named *The Sword of God*; and so little care had he for loss of life, that he would wed the widow of his enemy on the field still sodden with his own soldiers' blood. He had already distinguished himself in the annals of Islam. While fighting on the side of the Coreish, the Prophet's defeat at Ohod was due mainly to his prowess. After conversion, his was the only column which, on the capture of Mecca, disobeyed by shedding blood; and again shortly after, the cruel massacre of an unoffending tribe brought down upon him the Prophet's stern reproof. On the field of Muta he gave signal promise of his great future when, the Moslem army having been routed by Roman legions and its leaders one after another slain, he saved the shattered remnants from destruction by skilful and intrepid tactics. It was this Khalid whom Abu Bekr now sent forth against the rebel Prophets Toleiha and Moseilama.

Khalid marches against Toleiha.

His column, by far the strongest, was composed of the flower both of the Refugees and of the Citizens of Medina. To divert the enemy's attention, Abu Bekr gave out his destination as for Kheibar; and, to strike the greater terror, that the Caliph himself would join it there with a fresh Contingent. Khalid, however, was not long in quitting the northern route. Striking off to the right, he made direct for the mountain range, seat of the Beni Tai, and not distant from the scene of Toleiha's revolt among the Beni Asad.

A.H. 11.

Toleiha.

Of the doctrines of Toleiha, and the other pretenders to prophetic office, we know little; nor indeed anything at all to show wherein the secret of their influence lay. So far as appears, their worship was a mere travesty of Islam. Some doggerel verses and childish sayings are all that the contemptuous voice of tradition has transmitted of their teaching. That four Pretenders (for Sajâh the Prophetess was also such) should just then have arisen in different parts of Arabia and drawn multitudes after them, would seem to imply something deeper than senseless rhymes, and more specious than petty variations of the Moslem rite. It is not unreasonable to assume that the spiritual sense of Arabia had been quickened by the preaching of Mahomet, and that his example had both suggested the claims of others, and contributed thus rapidly to their success. Jealousy of Mecca and Medina, moreover, and impatience of the trammels of Islam, were powerful incentives for the Bedouin tribes to cast in their lot with these Pretenders. Thus the Beni Ghatafan who aforetime were in league with the Beni Asad, had recently fallen out with them and lost some pasture-land. Oyeina their chief now counselled a return to their old relations; "Let us go back," he said, "to the ancient alliance which before Islam we had with the Beni Asad, for never since we gave it up have I known our pasture boundaries. A Prophet of our own is better than a Prophet of the Coreish. Beside all this, Mahomet is dead and Toleiha is alive." So saying, Oyeina with 700 of his warriors joined Toleiha and his army at Bozakha.

Bedouin jealousy of Mecca and Medina.

Beni Tai reclaimed.

On first hearing of Toleiha's heresy, Mahomet had sent an Envoy to rally the faithful amongst the Beni Asad and crush the Pretender thus. But the cause gaining ground, was now supported by the neighbouring Beni Tai, as well as by insurgents who flocked to Toleiha after their defeat at Rabadza; and so the Envoy had to fly. The great

A.H. 11. family of Tai, however, was not wholly disloyal, for (as above mentioned) the legal dues had been already presented to Abu Bekr on behalf of some of them. Adi their loyal chief was therefore now sent forward by Khalid in the hope of detaching his people from Toleiha's cause. He found them in no friendly humour. "The Father of the foal!" they cried (such was the sobriquet they contemptuously used for Abu Bekr[1]), "thou shalt not persuade us to do homage to him." "Think better of it," replied Adi; "an army approacheth which ye cannot withstand. Ye shall know full soon he is no foal but the lusty stallion. Wherefore see ye to it." Alarmed at his words, they begged for time to recall their fellows who had joined Toleiha; "for," said they, "he will surely hold them as hostages, or else put them to death." So Khalid halted three days, and in the end the whole tribe not only tendered submission but joined him with 1000 horse, "the flower of the land of Tai and the bravest of them."

Battle of Bozakha.

Thus reinforced, Khalid advanced against Toleiha. On the march his army was exasperated by finding the bodies of two of their scouts, one a warrior of note named Okkâsha, who had been slain and left by Toleiha to be trampled on upon the road. The armies met at Bozakha, and the combat was hot and long. At last the tide of battle was turned by a strange utterance of Toleiha who was fighting in his prophetic garb of hair. Oyeina held on bravely with his 700 when, the situation becoming critical, he turned to Toleiha saying, "Hath any message come to thee from Gabriel?" "*Not yet*," answered the Prophet; a second time he asked, and received the same reply. "Yes," cried Toleiha a little after, "a message now hath come." "And what is it?" inquired Oyeina eagerly. "Thus saith Gabriel to me, *Thou shalt have a millstone like unto his, and an affair shall happen that thou wilt not forget*." "Away with thee!" cried Oyeina scornfully; "no doubt the Lord knoweth that an affair will happen that thou shalt not soon forget!

---

[1] *Abu Bekr* means "Father of the young camel"; so they called him by the nickname *Ab ul Fasil*, "Father of the foal."

A.H. 11.

Ho, every man to his tent!" So they turned to go; and thereupon the army fled.

Toleiha's sequel.

Toleiha escaped with his wife to Syria. The sequel is curious. At the first he took refuge with another tribe on the Syrian frontier. When the Beni Asad were pardoned he returned to them, and embraced Islam. Passing Medina soon after on pilgrimage to Mecca, he was seized and carried to Abu Bekr who set him at liberty, saying, "Let him alone. The Lord hath now verily guided him into the right path." When Omar succeeded, Toleiha presented himself to do homage. At first Omar spoke roughly to him,—"Thou art he that killed Okkâsha, and his comrade too. I love thee not." "Was it not better," answered the quondam prophet, "that they by my hand should obtain the crown of martyrdom, rather than that I by theirs should have perished in hell-fire?" When he had sworn allegiance, the Caliph asked him concerning his oracular gift, and whether anything yet remained of it. "Ah," he replied, "it was but a puff or two, as from a pair of bellows." So he returned to his tribe and went forth with them to the war in Irac where in the great struggle with Persia he became a hero of renown.

Repentant tribes received back into Islam.

After the battle of Bozakha the Beni Asad, fearing lest their families should fall into the conqueror's hands, submitted and were pardoned. Other important tribes in the neighbourhood which had stood aloof watching the event, now came in and received from Khalid the same terms. They resumed the profession of Islam with all its obligations, and in proof thereof brought in the tithe. A full amnesty was accorded on but one condition, that those who during the apostasy had taken the life of any Moslem should be delivered up. These were now (to carry out the Caliph's vow) put to the like death as that which they had inflicted. If they had speared their victims, cast them over precipices, drowned them in wells, or burned them in the fire, the persecutors were now subjected to the same cruel fate.

Body of malcontents discomfited.

Khalid stayed at Bozakha for a month, receiving the submission of the people and their tithes. Troops of horse scoured the country, striking terror all around. In

A.H. 11. only one direction was serious opposition met. A body of malcontents from amongst the penitent tribes, unable to brook submission, assumed a defiant attitude. They had yet to learn that the grip of Islam was stern and crushing. These gathered in a great multitude around Omm Siml, daughter of a famous chieftain of the Ghatafan. Her Mother had been taken prisoner, and put to a cruel death by Mahomet. She herself had waited upon Ayesha as a captive maid in the Prophet's household; but the haughty spirit of her race survived. Mounted on her Mother's war-camel, she led the force herself and incited the insurgents to a bold resistance. Khalid proclaimed a great reward to him who should maim her camel. It was soon disabled; and, Omm Siml slain, the rout of the rebel host was easy.

Oyeina pardoned.

A few of the leading rebels were sent prisoners to Abu Bekr. One of them, Oyeina a notable marauding chieftain, had often been the terror of Medina. When the City was besieged by the Coreish, he offered assistance to the Prophet on humiliating terms which were happily refused; and he was also one of the influential leaders "whose hearts," after the battle of Honein, "had been reconciled" by the Prophet's largesses. He was now led into Medina with the rest in chains, his hands tied behind his back. The Citizens crowded round to gaze at the fallen chief and the very children smote him with their hands crying out, "Oh enemy of the Lord, apostate!" "Not so," said Oyeina bravely; "I am no apostate and never was a believer until now." The Caliph listened patiently to the appeal of the captives. He forgave them, and commanded their release.[1]

II. *Discomfiture of the Beni Temîm. Story of Mâlik ibn Noweira*

Khalid's advance, 11 A.H. (Nov. ?) 632 A.D.

Having subdued the tribes inhabiting the hills and deserts north of Medina, Khalid bent his steps eastward, against the Beni Temîm who occupied the plateau towards the Persian Gulf.

---

[1] For Omm Siml's mother, see *Life of Mahomet*, p. 336; and for Oyeina, *ibid.* p. 280, etc.

Beni Temîm.

This great tribe, partly Christian and partly heathen, had from time immemorial spread its innumerable branches over the pasture-lands between Yemama and the mouth of the Euphrates. With the rest of Arabia it acknowledged Mahomet and submitted to his claims. But the Prophet's death had produced amongst them the same apostasy as elsewhere. After Abu Bekr's first success some of its Chieftains, as we have seen, came to Medina with the tithes. Meanwhile a strange complication had arisen which embroiled the Beni Yerboa (one of their clans, commanded by the famous Mâlik ibn Noweira) in hostilities with the rest of the tribe, and eventually brought Khalid on the scene.

Sajâh, the prophetess, invades Central Arabia.

It was no less than the advent of the Prophetess Sajâh, at the head of a great host from Mesopotamia. Descended from the Beni Yerboa, her family had migrated north and joined the Beni Taghlib, among whom in Mesopotamia she had been brought up as a Christian. How long she had assumed the prophetic office and what were her peculiar tenets, we do not know. At the head of the Taghlib and other Christian tribes she now crossed into Arabia hoping to profit by the present confusion, and was on her way to attack Medina. Reaching the seats of the Temîm, she summoned to her presence the Beni Yerboa her own clan, and promised them the kingdom should victory crown her arms. They joined her standard, with Mâlik ibn Noweira at their head. The other clans of the Temîm refused to acknowledge the Prophetess; and so, diverted from her design upon Medina, she turned her arms against them. In a series of combats, though supported by Mâlik, she was worsted. Then, having made terms and exchanged prisoners, she bethought her of attacking the rival prophet Moseilama, and so passed onwards to Yemama.

Mâlik ibn Noweira;

As Khalid flushed with victory now approached, most of the branches of the Temîm hastened to tender their submission. At this critical juncture, the withdrawal of Sajâh left Mâlik ibn Noweira with the Yerboa tribe in a

A.H. 11.

position of some perplexity, and he was undecided how to act. Conflicting views respecting Mâlik's loyalty divided the Moslem camp. For some reason Khalid was bent on attacking the Yerboa. The men of Medina were equally opposed to the design, for which they alleged there was no authority. It had been better for Khalid to have listened. But he replied haughtily, "I am Commander, and it is for me to decide. I will march against Mâlik with such as choose to follow me. I compel no man." So he went forward and left the malcontents behind. These, however, thinking better of it rejoined the army. Khalid then in full force, marched straight against the headquarters of Mâlik, but found not a soul upon the spot. It was utterly deserted.

Brought a prisoner to Khalid.

In fact, Mâlik had resolved on submission, though his proud spirit rebelled against presenting himself before Khalid. He knew the ordinance of Abu Bekr, that none but they who resisted and who refused the call to prayer should be molested. So he told his people that there was no longer use in opposing this new way, but that bowing down they should suffer the wave to pass over them. "Break up your camp," he said, "and depart every man to his house." Khalid, still bent on treating the neighbourhood as enemy's land, sent forth bands everywhere to slay and plunder and take captive all who failed to respond to the call for prayer. Amongst others, Mâlik was seized with his wife and a party of his people. When challenged, they replied that they were Moslems. "Why, then, these weapons?" it was asked. So they laid aside their arms and were led as captives to the camp. As they passed by Khalid, Mâlik cried aloud to him, "Thy Master never gave command for this." "*Thy* master," rejoined Khalid, "didst thou say? Then, rebel, by thine own admission, he is not thine!"

Mâlik ibn Noweira put to death.

The captors differed in their evidence. Some averred that the prisoners had offered resistance. Others, with Abu Catâda, a citizen of Medina at their head, deposed that they had declared themselves Moslems and at once complied with the call to prayer. So the party was remanded till morning under an armed guard. The night set in cold and stormy, and Khalid, with the view (so he averred) of protecting them from its inclemency, gave command "to *wrap* the prisoners." The word was ambiguous, signifying in another dialect "to *slay*"; and Dhirâr, commandant of the guard, taking it in that sense, began to put the prisoners, including Ibn Noweira, forthwith to the sword. Khalid, hearing the uproar, hurried forth; but all was over, and he retired exclaiming, "When the Lord hath determined a thing, the same cometh verily to pass." But the fate of Mâlik was not thus easily to be set at rest. The men of Medina who had opposed the advance were shocked at his cruel fate. Abu Catâda roundly asserted the responsibility of Khalid. "This is thy work!" he said; and though chided, persisted in the charge, declaring that never again would he serve under Khalid's banner. In company with Motammim, Ibn Noweira's brother, he set out at once for Medina, and there laid formal complaint before the Caliph. Omar, with his native impetuosity, took up the cause of the Yerboa chief. Khalid had given point to the allegations of his enemies by wedding Leila, the beautiful widow of his victim, on the spot. From this scandalous act, Omar drew the worst conclusion. "He hath conspired to slay a believer," he said, "and hath gone in unto his wife." He was instant with Abu Bekr that the offender should be degraded and put in bonds saying, "The sword of Khalid, dipped in "violence and outrage, must be sheathed." "Nay!" replied the Caliph (of whom it is said that he never degraded any one of his Commanders);—"the Sword which the Lord "hath made bare against the heathen, shall I sheathe it? "That be far from me!" Nevertheless he summoned Khalid to answer the charge.

His widow taken to wife by Khalid.

Khalid obeyed the call. On reaching Medina, he went straightway to the great Mosque and entered it in rough costume, his clothes rusty with the girded armour, and his turban, stuck with arrows, coiled rudely about the head. As he passed along the courtyard towards the Caliph's chamber, Omar met him. Unable to restrain himself, he

Khalid exonerated by Abu Bekr,

A.H. 11.

seized the arrows from the warrior's turban, broke them over his shoulder, and abused him as hypocrite, murderer, and adulterer. Khalid, unaware whether Abu Bekr might not be of the same mind, answered not a word but passed into the Caliph's presence. There he told his story, and the explanation was accepted by Abu Bekr; but he chided him roughly for having taken to wife his victim's widow, and run counter to Arab sentiment in incontinently celebrating his nuptials on the field of battle. As Khalid thus relieved, again passed out, he lightly rallied Omar in words which showed that he had been exonerated. Motammim then pressed his claim of blood-money for his brother's life and release of the prisoners that remained. For the release Abu Bekr gave command, but payment he declined.

But held guilty by Omar.

Omar, still unconvinced of Khalid's innocence, advised that he should be withdrawn from the command. He persevered in pressing this view upon Abu Bekr, who at last replied, "Omar, hold thy peace! Refrain thy tongue "from Khalid. He gave an order, and the order was mis-"understood." But Omar heeded not. He neither forgave nor forgot, as in the sequel we shall see.

Scandal of the case.

The scandal was the greater because Mâlik ibn Noweira was a chief renowned for generosity and princely virtues, as well as for poetic talent. His brother Motammim a poet also of no mean fame, commemorated his tragic end in many touching verses which Omar loved to listen to, and used to say that, "had he been himself a poet, he would have had no higher ambition than to mourn in such verse the fate of his own brother Zeid," who shortly after fell at Yemama.

The materials are too meagre for a conclusive judgment on the guilt or innocence of Khalid. But his scandalous marriage with the widow of Ibn Noweira whose blood was yet fresh upon the spot, if it gave no colour to darker suspicion, justified at anyrate the indictment of shameless indulgence and reckless disregard of the proprieties of life.

III. *Battle of Yemama*

A.H. 11.

END OF 11 A.H. BEGINNING OF 633 A.D.

Khalid's campaign against Moseilama. End of 11 A.H. Beginning of 633 A.D.

But sterner work was in reserve for Khalid. In the centre of Arabia, a little towards the east, lay Yemama. The Beni Hanîfa, a powerful branch of the great Bekr tribe, resided there. Partly Christian and partly heathen, they had submitted to Mahomet, but now were in rebellion 40,000 strong, around their Prophet Moseilama. It was against these that Khalid next directed his steps.

Moseilama.

The beginning of Moseilama's story belongs to the life of Mahomet.[1] Small in stature, and of mean countenance, he yet had qualities which fitted him for command. He visited Medina with a deputation from his people, and it was pretended that words had then fallen from Mahomet signifying that he was destined to share with him the prophetic office. On this Moseilama advanced the claim, and was accepted by his people as their prophet. Summoned from Medina to abandon these pretensions, he sent an insolent reply claiming to divide the land. Mahomet in anger drove the ambassador from his presence, and thereupon sent Rajjâl a convert of the same tribe, to counteract the heresy and reclaim his brethren; but Rajjâl, like the rest, was gained over by the Pretender. Moseilama, we are told, deceived the people by pretended miracles, counterfeited the language of the Coran, and instituted prayers like those of Mahomet. In short, his religion was but a wretched travesty of Islam. Though strongly supported by his own people both as their Prophet and their Ruler, he now felt that the meshes of Abu Bekr began to close round him. The Caliph's Generals were steadily reclaiming the coast of the Persian Gulf, and Khalid whom he dreaded most was not far behind. At this juncture came tidings that the Prophetess Sajâh, worsted as we have seen by the Beni Temîm, was coming with troops against him. In his perplexity he sent her a friendly invitation. She came, and their sentiments

His marriage with Sajâh, the Prophetess.

---

[1] See *Life of Mahomet*, p. 462.

A.H. 11. were so much alike that the Prophet of Yemama took the Prophetess of Mesopotamia to wife, and celebrated their nuptials on the spot,—the dower to be one half the revenues of Yemama. After a few days, Sajâh departed for her northern home and, like a meteor, vanished, just as she had startled Arabia by her advent. Parties of Mesopotamian horse still ranged over the land collecting her dues when Khalid's approach at once changed the scene; and Moseilama marching out with a heavy force to meet him, pitched his camp at Acraba.

Ikrima and Shorahbîl's reverse.

Ikrima and Shorahbîl, sent by Abu Bekr to quell the rising at Yemama, had already suffered badly at the hands of Moseilama from a hasty and ill-advised advance. The reverse was so serious that Abu Bekr wrote angrily to Ikrima,—"I will not see thy face, nor shalt thou see mine, as now thou art. Thou shalt not return hither to dishearten the people. Depart unto the uttermost coasts, and there join the armies in the east and south." So, skirting Yemama, Ikrima went forward to Oman, there to retrieve his tarnished reputation. Shorahbîl, meanwhile, was directed to halt and await the approach of Khalid.

Khalid sets out for Yemama.

It was upon this reverse that Khalid, when summoned to Medina about the affair of Mâlik, received his commission to attack Moseilama. In anticipation of severe fighting the Caliph sent with him a fresh column of veterans from amongst the men of Mecca and Medina. Thus reinforced Khalid returned to his camp at Bitah, and advanced in strength to meet the enemy.

Mojâa taken prisoner.

While yet a march from Acraba, Khalid surprised a mounted body of the Beni Hanîfa under command of their chief Mojâa. They were returning from a raid against a neighbouring tribe, unaware of his approach. But as they belonged to the enemy, they were all put to the sword excepting Mojâa, whom Khalid spared in hope of his being useful on the morrow, and kept chained in his tent under charge of Leila his lately espoused wife.

Battle of Yemama.

Next day the armies met upon the sandy plain of Acraba. The enemy rushed on with desperate bravery. "Fight for your loved ones!" they cried,—"it is the day of "jealousy and vengeance; if ye be worsted, your maidens "will be ravished and your wives dragged to their foul "embrace!" So fierce was the shock that the Moslems were driven back and their camp uncovered. The wild Bedouins entered the tent of Khalid, and, but for the chivalry of her captive, who conjured his countrymen to spare a lady of noble birth, Leila would have perished by their swords. "Go, fight against men," Mojâa cried, "and leave this woman," on which they cut the tent-ropes and departed. There was danger for Islam at the moment. Defeat would have been disastrous; indeed, the Faith could hardly have survived. But now the spirit of the Moslems was aroused. To stimulate rivalry between the Bedouins and City Arabs of his force, Khalid made them to fight apart. On this they rallied one the other,—"Now," cried the sons of the desert, "we shall see carnage wax hot amongst the raw levies of the town. We shall teach them how to fight!" Prodigies of valour were fought all round. Tradition dwells with enthusiasm on the heroic words and deeds of the leaders, as one after another they fell in the thick of battle. Zeid, brother of Omar, leading the men of Mecca, singled out Rajjâl and, reproaching his apostasy, despatched him forthwith. A furious south wind charged with desert sand, blinded the Moslems and caused a momentary check. Upbraiding their slackness, Zeid cried out,—"Onwards to those that have gone before! Not a "word will I speak till we drive these apostates back, or I "appear to clear me before my Lord. Close your eyes and "clench your teeth. Forward like men!" So saying, he led the charge and fell. Abu Hodzeifa, with leaves of the scripture stuck on the flagstaff which he bore, and calling out, "Fight for the Coran, ye Moslems, and adorn it by your deeds!" followed his example and shared the common fate. His freedman seized the banner as it fell, and exclaiming "I were a craven bearer of the sacred text if I "feared death," plunged with it into the battle and was slain. Nor were the Men of Medina far behind. Their Commander as they gave way reproached them thus,—"Woe to you because of this backsliding. Verily, I am

A.H. 11.

A.H. 11.

clear of ye, even as I am clear of these," pointing to the apostate enemy, and so he flung himself among them and perished in their midst. Animated thus, the rank and file charged furiously. Backwards and forwards swayed the line, and heavy was the carnage. But urged by Khalid's valiant arm, and raising the battle-cry "*Ya Mohammedâ!*" the Moslem arms at length prevailed. The enemy broke and fled. "To the garden!" cried Mohakkem, a brave leader of the Beni Hanîfa; "to the garden, and close the gate!" Taking his stand, he guarded their retreat as they rushed into an orchard surrounded by a strong wall, and Moseilama with them. The Moslem troops following close, swarmed round the wall but found the entrance barred. At last one cried, "Lift me aloft upon the wall." So they lifted him up. For a moment, as he looked on the surging mass below, the hero hesitated; then, boldly leaping down, he beat right and left, until he reached the gate, and threw it open. Like waters pent up, his comrades rushed in; and, as beasts of the forest snared in a trap, so wildly struggled the brave Beni Hanîfa in the *Garden of Death.* Hemmed within the narrow space, hampered by the trees, arms useless from their very numbers, they were hewn down and perished to a man. The carnage was fearful, for besides the "thousands" (as tradition puts it) slain within the walls, an equal number were killed on the field, and again an equal number in the flight. The Moslems too, despite their splendid victory, had cause to remember the "Garden of Death," for their loss was beyond all previous experience. Besides those killed hand to hand in the garden, great numbers fell in the battle. The Refugees lost 360 men, and the Men of Medina 300, nearly 700 in all; while the slaughter amongst the Bedouins, though somewhat less, raised the loss beyond 1200, besides the wounded. Amongst the dead were nine-and-thirty chief Companions of the Prophet. At Medina there was hardly a house, whether of Refugees or Citizens, in which the voice of wailing was not heard.

Enemy discomfited.

The Garden of Death.

Terrible slaughter on both sides.

Moseilama among the slain.

Moseilama was slain by Wahshi the same negro warrior who, swinging round his head a javelin after the

A.H. 11.

savage Ethiopian style, had on the field of Ohod brought Hamza to the ground. After the battle, Khalid carried the chief Mojâa, still in chains, over the field to identify the dead. Turning the bodies over, they came upon a stalwart figure. "Look, was this your Master?" said Khalid. "Nay," replied Mojâa, "that was a nobler and a better man";—it was the brave Mohakkem who, covering the retreat, was slain by the Caliph's son. Entering the "Garden of Death," among the heaps of mangled dead they stumbled on one of insignificant mien. "This is your man," Mojâa said, as he turned the body of Moseilama on its side;—"truly ye have done for him!" "Yea," replied Khalid, "or rather it is he that hath done for you all that which he hath done."

Truce with the Beni Hanîfa.

The Mussulman horse now scoured the country and every day brought in bands of prisoners. Aware that after their crushing defeat the Beni Hanîfa were incapable of resistance, their chief Mojâa bethought him of a stratagem. He represented that the forts and fastnesses were still held in force throughout the country; in proof of which he sent to tell the aged men, the women,—all that were left behind, and even the children,—to line their battlements in warrior's disguise. Persuaded thus that the inhabitants would fight to the last, and seeing the army wearied and anxious for their homes, Khalid concluded a truce more favourable than he would otherwise have given. When Mojâa's artifice came to light, Khalid was angry; but excusing him on the ground of patriotism, in the end stood by the treaty. No sooner was it concluded than he received a despatch of unwonted severity from Abu Bekr, who, to strike terror into other apostate tribes, commanded that not a single fighting man of the rebel and ungodly race be spared. Fortunately this the truce forbade; the Beni Hanîfa were received back into Islam, and a portion only of the multitude were retained as prisoners. The campaign ended, Khalid sent a deputation of the tribe to Abu Bekr who received them courteously. "Out upon you!" at first he said; "how is it that this impostor has led you all astray?" "Oh Caliph!" they answered, "thou hast heard

A.H. 11.

it all; he was one whom the Lord blessed not, nor yet his people"; and they repeated to him some of the things he used to say. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Abu Bekr; "what kind of words are these? There is neither sense in them for good nor yet for evil, but a strange fatuity to have beguiled you thus." So he dismissed them to their homes.

Many Companions slain.

Among the slain are not a few names familiar to the student of the Prophet's life. The carnage amongst the "*Readers*" (those who had the Coran by heart) was so great as to give Omar the first idea of collecting the Sacred text, "lest any part of it should be lost." At the death of his brother Zeid who had shared with him all the dangers of the early battles of Islam, Omar was inconsolable. "Thou art returned home," he said to his son Abdallah, "safe and sound; and Zeid is dead. Wherefore wast not thou slain before him? I wish not to see thy face." "Father," was his reply, "he asked for martyrdom, and the Lord granted it. I strove after the same, but it was not given unto me." Such was the spirit of these Moslem warriors.

Khalid takes Mojâa's daughter to wife.

Khalid again signalised his victory by wedding a captive maid upon the field. "Give me thy daughter to wife," he said to Mojâa, the same who had so faithfully defended his bride in the hour of peril. "Wait," replied Mojâa; "be not so hasty; thou wilt harm thyself in the Caliph's eyes, and me likewise." "Man, give me thy daughter!" he repeated imperiously; so Mojâa gave her to him. When Abu Bekr heard of it, he wrote him a letter sprinkled with blood. "By my life! thou son of "Khalid's father, thou art a pretty fellow, living thus at "thine ease. Thou weddest a damsel, whilst the ground "beneath the nuptial couch is yet moistened with the blood "of twelve hundred!" The reproof fell lightly upon Khalid. "This is the work," he said as he read the epistle, "of that left-handed fellow," meaning Omar. The sentiment, however, was Abu Bekr's own; but the "Sword of the Lord" could not be spared.

We shall meet Khalid next in Chaldæa, by the banks of the Euphrates.

CHAPTER VI

APOSTASY AND REBELLION CRUSHED IN OTHER PARTS OF THE PENINSULA

11 A.H. 632–633 A.D.

Campaign in East and South of Arabia, 11 A.H. 632–3 A.D.

VHILE Khalid thus pursued his victorious career from ie North to the Centre of Arabia, the various columns espatched by Abu Bekr were engaged with the apostate nd rebellious tribes in other parts of the Peninsula. The pposition there was not less stubborn; and the success, iough in many quarters slow and even at times doubtful, 'as in the end complete

Bahrein taken by Ala.

Beyond Yemama, and skirting the Persian Gulf be- ween Catif and Oman, lie the two desert provinces of Iejer and Bahrein. Mondzir, their Christian chief, had dopted Islam, and recognising the suzerainty of the Pro- het had received Ala as Resident at his Court. But Iondzir died shortly after Mahomet, and the Province went ito rebellion. Ala fled, but was sent back with a strong orce to reclaim the apostate people. The brilliant cam- aign of Khalid had just then struck terror into the neigh- ouring country; and so, as he passed near the borders of emama, Ala was joined by contingents from many Chiefs nxious thus to prove their loyalty. A scion of the Hira ynasty hostile to Islam, had succeeded Mondzir, and Ala ound him so well supported that, even thus strengthened, e had to entrench his army and content himself with ingle combats and indecisive skirmishes. At last, finding hrough his spies that the enemy were in a festive and runken state, he overwhelmed them unexpectedly and ook their Prince a prisoner. The discomfited host fled

A.H. 11.

by ship to Darin, an island near the coast, whither they were again pursued and put utterly to the sword. The spoil was prodigious, and so was the multitude of women and children taken captive.

Miraculous lake; and drying up of the sea.

On the Prophet's death tradition ceases to indulge in the miraculous; but this expedition forms a singular exception. As the column marching from Medina reached the waterless zone of Dahna, it had nearly perished by long-protracted thirst; when in the last extremity, water suddenly shining in the horizon man and beast hurried joyfully on to slake their thirst at an extensive lake. No spring had been ever seen in that wilderness before; nor was the miraculous lake ever found again. Shortly after, while pursuing the apostate host to the isle of Darin, a second miracle parted the waves, and the Moslems after a wild invocation of the Deity, rushed on and crossed the strait as it had been a shallow beach. A pious bard has likened the passage to that of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and a monk is said to have been converted by the double miracle of waters breaking out in the wilderness, and waters drying up in the channel of the great deep.

Mothanna.

While thus engaged, Ala received material help from loyal followers along the coast. Amongst those who aided in this work was Mothanna, a chief of great influence amongst the Bekr clans; following up the victory of Ala along the Persian Gulf, this warrior in his progress from Hejer northwards, reached at last the delta of the Euphrates, where he inaugurated a fresh movement that will shortly engage attention.

Oman.

The reduction of the important province of Oman followed close on that of Bahrein. Its Prince had recently tendered allegiance to Mahomet. Amru was thereupon deputed as Resident, and the tithes were, by reason of the distance, given up to the local poor. Notwithstanding this concession, Mahomet was no sooner dead than the people, led by a rebel who claimed to be a prophet, rebelled. The Prince fled to the mountains, and Amru to Medina. The task of reclaiming Oman and the adjoining province of

Mahra was committed by Abu Bekr to Hodzeifa, a convert of influence in those parts. He was assisted by Ikrima, sent, as we have seen by Abu Bekr, to retrieve his reputation in this distant quarter. Arrived in Oman, they effected a junction with the loyal Prince. An engagement followed, in which the Moslems, hard pressed, were near to suffering defeat, when a strong column from the tribes recently reclaimed in Bahrein appeared on the field and turned the battle in their favour. The slaughter amongst the enemy was great, and the women placed in the rear to nerve their courage, fell a welcome prize into the believers' hands. The mart of Daba, enriched by Indian merchandise, yielded a magnificent booty, and there was at once despatched to Medina the royal Fifth of slaves and plunder.

Battle of Daba.

Hodzeifa was left behind as governor of Oman. Ikrima, having thus reached the easternmost point of Arabia, turned to the south-west; and with an army daily swelled by levies from repentant tribes, pursued his victorious course to Mahra. This province was at the moment distracted by a breach between two rival chiefs. Espousing the cause of the weaker who at once avowed the faith, Ikrima attacked the other and achieved a great victory. Among the spoil were 2000 Bactrian camels and a vast supply of arms and beasts of burden. This quarter of the Peninsula quickly subdued and restored to order, Ikrima, now in great strength, advanced as he had been instructed, to join Mohajir in the campaign against Hadhramaut and Yemen. But we must first take note of how things stood after the death of Mahomet nearer home, in the west and south of the Peninsula.

Mahra.

While the towns of Mecca and Tayif remained tolerably secure, the country round about was rife with violence and misrule. Hordes from the lawless tribes, ready as ever for plunder and rapine, hovered close even to the Holy City. They were attacked by the Governor, and dispersed with slaughter. Order was restored by a body of 500 men quartered within the sacred limits, and by pickets throughout the neighbourhood. But from thence

The Hejaz and Tihama.

A.H. 11.

all the way to Yemen, nothing was to be seen save turmoil and alarm. Troops of bandits, remnants of the false prophet's army, ravaged Najran; and the loyal adherents of Islam were fain to fly to mountain fastnesses. The Tihama, or long strip of land skirting the shore of the Red Sea, was overrun by bands of Bedouin robbers, stopping all communication between the north and south. An army at length cleared the country of these robbers,—so effectually indeed, that the roads became again for a time unpassable, but now only from the offensive mass of carcases strewn upon them.

Yemen after Aswad's death.

Peace in Yemen was not so easily restored. The "Veiled Prophet" Aswad had been recently assassinated by conspirators in the interest of Mahomet.[1] These were Cays an Arab chief, and two others of Persian descent Feroze and Dadweih, into whose hands the government of Sanaa fell. The tidings reaching Medina just after Mahomet's death, Abu Bekr appointed Feroze to be his lieutenant. The Arab blood of Cays rebelled against serving under a Persian, and he plotted to expel the whole body of foreign immigrants. To effect this, he called in the aid of Amr ibn Madekerib, a famous poet and influential Chief who, having like others cast off the faith, ravaged the country with remnants of the false prophet's army. Dadweih was treacherously slain by this Amr at a feast, but Feroze escaped, and after much hardship secured his retreat with a friendly tribe. For a time Cays carried all before him. The family of Feroze was taken captive, and the Persian settlers, pursued in every direction, fled to the mountains, or took ship from Aden. Feroze appealed to Medina; but it was long before the Caliph had any men to send. So Feroze cast about for himself and at length, by the aid of loyal tribes, put the troops of Cays to flight, regained possession of his family and reoccupied Sanaa.

Cays and Amr defeated.

But more effectual help was now approaching. On one side was Mohajir. Appointed by the Prophet his lieutenant in Hadhramaut, he had been detained by sickness at Medina, perhaps also by inability earlier to obtain

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 464.

A.H. 11.

Yemen restored. End of 11 A.H. Spring, 633 A.D.

a following. Last of the Commanders to take the field, it was probably ten or twelve months after the Prophet's death before he marched south, and, joined on the way by loyal tribes, approached the disturbed country at the head of a substantial force. On the other hand, Ikrima, with an ever-growing army, advanced from the east. Hastening to meet Mohajir he, for the present, left Hadhramaut aside and passed rapidly on towards Aden. Alarmed at the gathering storm, Cays and Amr joined their forces to oppose Mohajir. But soon quarrelling, they parted, sending each other, after Arab wont, lampoons in bitter verse. Opposition being now vain, Amr sought by an unworthy stratagem to gain his safety. Making a night attack on Cays, he carried him prisoner to Mohajir; but he had forgotten a safe-conduct for himself. Mohajir, therefore, seized both, and sent them in chains to Medina. The Caliph was at first minded to put Amr to death because of the murder of Dadweih; but he denied the crime, and there was no evidence to prove it. "Art thou not ashamed," said Abu Bekr to him, "that following the rebel cause, thou art ever either a fugitive or in bonds? Hadst thou been a defender of the Faith instead, then had the Lord raised thee above thy fellows." "So assuredly it is," replied the humbled chief; "I will embrace the faith, and never again desert it." The Caliph forgave them; and his clemency was not abused, for we find both these gallant and unscrupulous chiefs soon after fighting loyally in the Persian war. After this, Yemen was speedily reduced to order. And Mohajir was at liberty to pursue his march to Hadhramaut.

Hadhramaut. Ashath ibn Cays

The government of the great southern province of Hadhramaut was held with difficulty during the protracted absence of Mohajir by one Ziad, who aroused the hatred of its occupants the Beni Kinda, by exacting from them the tithe; but with the support of some still loyal clans he was able to hold his place. In one of his raids Ziad having carried off the families of a vanquished tribe, Ashath ibn Cays chief of the Beni Kinda, was moved by their cries; and, having gathered a strong force, fell upon Ziad and

A.H. 11. rescued the captives. It is the same Ashath who, when he tendered homage to Mahomet, betrothed to himself the sister of Abu Bekr.[1] Now compromised, he went into active rebellion, and roused the whole country against Ziad who, surrounded by the enemy, despatched an urgent summons for Mohajir to hasten to his deliverance.

subdued by Mohajir and Ikrima.

By this time Mohajir and Ikrima, marching respectively from Sanaa and Aden, had effected a junction at Mareb, and were crossing the sandy desert which lay between them and Hadhramaut. Receiving the message, Mohajir set off in haste with a flying squadron and, joined by Ziad, fell upon Ashath and discomfited him with great slaughter. The routed enemy fled for refuge to a stronghold, which Mohajir immediately invested. Ikrima soon came up with the main body, and there were now troops enough both to besiege the city and ravage the country around. Stung at witnessing the ruin of their kindred, and preferring death to dishonour, the garrison sallied forth and fought the Moslems in the plain. After a desperate struggle, in which the approaches were filled with bodies of the dead, they were driven back. Meanwhile, Abu Bekr, apprised of their obstinate resistance, sent orders to make an example of the rebels and give no quarter. The wretched garrison, with the enemy daily increasing and no prospect of relief, were now bereft of hope. Seeing the position desperate, the wily Ashath made his way to Ikrima, and treacherously agreed to deliver up the fortress if nine lives were guaranteed. The Moslems entered, slew the fighting men, and took the women captive. When Ashath presented the list of nine to be spared,—"Thy name is not here!" cried Mohajir, exultingly; for the craven traitor had forgotten in the excitement of the moment, to enter his own name;—"The Lord be praised, who hath condemned thee out of thine own mouth." So, having cast him into chains, he was about to order his execution when Ikrima interposed and induced him, much against his will, to refer the cause to

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 448.

Abu Bekr. The crowd of captive women, mourning the massacre of their sons and husbands, loaded the recreant as he passed by with bitter imprecation. Arrived at Medina, the Caliph abused him as a pusillanimous wretch who had neither the power to lead, nor yet the courage to defend, his people; and threatened him with death. But at last, moved by his appeal to the terms agreed upon by Ikrima, and by protestation that he would thenceforth fight bravely for the faith, Abu Bekr not only forgave him but allowed him to fulfil the marriage contract with his sister. Ashath remained for a while in idleness at Medina, and the Caliph would say that one of the few things he repented of, was having weakly spared the rebel's life. But afterwards Ashath went forth to the wars, and as we shall see, effectually redeemed his name.

Ashath spared by Abu Bekr.

Thus, in this the last province of the Peninsula, rebellion was finally crushed and the reign of Islam completely re-established. Mohajir elected to remain in Yemen, where he shared the government with Feroze. Ziad continued to administer Hadhramaut.

Peace universally restored.

A curious story is told of a lady whom Ikrima married at Aden, and carried with him in his camp. She had been betrothed to Mahomet, but the marriage had not been completed. The soldiers murmured, and questioned the propriety of Ikrima's marriage. Mohajir referred the matter to Abu Bekr, who decided that there was nothing wrong in the proceeding, as Mahomet had never fulfilled his contract with the damsel.[1]

Lady who had been betrothed to Mahomet.

I should not here omit to mention the fate of two songstresses in Yemen, who were accused, one of satirising the Prophet, the other of ridiculing the Moslems, in their songs. Mohajir had the hands of both cut off, and also (to stay their singing for the future) their front teeth pulled out. The Caliph, on hearing of it, approved the punishment of the first; for, said he: "Crime against the Prophet is not as crime against a common man; and, indeed, had the case been first referred to me, I should, as a warning to

Two songstresses mutilated.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 377. She was brought to the Prophet for her beauty, who finding some blemish, sent her home.

A.H. 11.

others, have directed her execution." But he disapproved the mutilation of the other.

A free-booter burned to death.

As a rule Abu Bekr was mild in his judgments, and even generous to a fallen and submissive foe. But there were, as we have seen, exceptions. On one occasion the treachery of a rebel chief irritated him to an act of barbarous cruelty. Fujaa a leader of some note, under pretence of fighting against the insurgents in his neighbourhood, obtained from the Caliph arms and accoutrements for his band. Thus equipped, he abused the trust, and becoming a free-booter, attacked and plundered alike Moslem and apostate. Abu Bekr thereupon wrote letters to a loyal chief in that quarter to go against the brigand. Hard pressed, Fujaa challenged his adversary to a parley, and asserted that he held a commission as good as his. "If thou speakest true," answered the other, "lay aside thy weapons and accompany me to Abu Bekr." He did so, but no sooner did he appear at Medina, than the Caliph, enraged at his treachery, cried aloud: "Go forth with this traitor to the burial-ground, and there burn him with fire." So, hard by the graveyard of the City, they gathered wood and heaping it together at the place of prayer, kindled the pile and cast Fujaa on it. If the charges were well founded, which we have no ground for doubting, Fujaa deserved the fate of a bandit; but to cast him alive into the flames was a savage act, for which Abu Bekr was sorry afterwards, and used to say,—"It is one of the three things which I would I had not done."

CHAPTER VII

REVIEW. SULLENNESS OF RECLAIMED TRIBES. CAMPAIGNS IN SYRIA AND CHALDÆA. DESPATCH OF TROOPS REKINDLES ENTHUSIASM. DOMESTIC EVENTS

11 A.H. 632 A.D.

Review. Reign of Islam re-established in Arabia.

THUS, within a year of the death of the Prophet, the sway of Islam, which for a time had clean gone, was re-established throughout the Peninsula. The circle of victory was now complete. Begun, with the avenging expedition of Osâma in the north, it was followed up by Khalid's brilliant achievements in the east and centre of Arabia. But while in the "Garden of Death" the flower of the faithful were deciding the fate of Islam then trembling in the balance, operations for a season languished elsewhere. Eventually, the campaign was carried vigorously over the other provinces, though in some quarters with limited resource and varying fortune; till, in the end, Ikrima sweeping down the eastern coast, and joined by Mohajir in the south, stamped out as we have seen the last embers of apostasy.

The Arabs sullen, till roused by war-cry from without.

The rebellion was suppressed, but the Arab tribes remained sullen and averse. The Bedouin, wont to wander wild and free over his pathless deserts, chafed at the demand of tithe, and spurned obedience to Medina. Simply force and fear as yet attached him to the Caliph. The question occurs, what would have been the fortune of Islam had no great impulse arisen from without? The prospect was not encouraging. Convictions so shallow, and aspirations so low, as those of the Bedouin would soon have disappeared; force and fear would not long

A.H. 11.

have availed to hold together such disintegrated materials as go to form the Arab nation. The South was jealous of the North; Bedouins of the desert scorned the settled population; each tribe had cause of rivalry with its neighbour, and feuds were ever arising out of the law of blood. Even in Medina, cradle of the faith, the Beni Aus were impatient of the Beni Khazraj and both were jealous of the Refugees. The only authority recognised by a Bedouin is that of his tribal Chief, and even that sits lightly. To him freedom is life; and dependence on a Central power most hateful. If nothing external had supervened, he would soon have shaken off the yoke of Islam, and Arabia would have returned to its primeval state. But fortunately for Islam, a new idea electrified the nation. No sooner was apostasy put down than, first in Chaldæa and then in Syria, collision with wild border tribes kindled the fire of foreign war; and forthwith the whole Arabian people, both Town and Bedouin, were riveted to Islam by a common bond—the love of rapine and the lust of spoil.

Islam intended for Arabia;

That the heritage of Islam is the world, was an afterthought. The idea, spite of much proleptic tradition, had been conceived but dimly, if at all, by Mahomet himself. His world was Arabia, and for it the new Dispensation was ordained. The Revelation ran in "simple Arabic" for the teaching of its people.[1] From first to last the summons was to Arabs and to them alone. It is true that some years before his death, Mahomet sent embassies to the Kings and Princes around him, calling on them to confess the faith of Islam; but the step was not in any way followed up. Nor was it otherwise with the command to fight against Jews, Christians and Idolaters; that command as announced to the Arab tribes assembled at the Farewell pilgrimage, had reference to Arabia alone, and had no immediate bearing on warfare beyond its bounds. The Prophet's dying legacy was to the same effect:—"See," said he, "that there be but this one Faith throughout Arabia." The seed of a universal creed had indeed been sown; but that it ever germinated was due to circumstance rather than design. Even Omar after splendid conquest everywhere, dreaded lest his armies should proceed too far, and be cut off from succour. Therefore he set barriers (as we shall see) to the ambition of his arms beyond which they should not pass.

---

[1] Coran XLII. v. 6; *et passim.*

Spread at the call to conquer.

Still, though nowhere in the Coran distinctly commanded, universal empire was altogether in accord with the spirit of the Faith. "When a people leaveth off to fight in the ways of the Lord," said Abu Bekr in his inaugural address (and so saying struck the keynote of militant Islam) "the Lord casteth off that people." Thus, when the Rubicon once was crossed, the horizon enlarged in ever-widening circles till it embraced the World. It was the scent of war that now turned the sullen temper of the Arab tribes into eager loyalty: for thus the brigand spirit of the Bedouin was brought into unison with the new-born fire of Islam. The call to battle reverberated throughout the land, and was answered eagerly. The exodus began with the tribes in the north, those first reclaimed from their apostasy. Later, in the second year of the Caliphate, the war-cry spread to the south, and grew in magnitude year by year. At first the Caliph forbade that help should be received from any that had backslidden, the privilege being reserved for such only as had remained steadfast in the faith. But, step by step, as new spheres opened out, and appeal ran from shore to shore for fresh levies to fill the "Martyr" gaps, the ban was put aside and all were bidden. Warrior after warrior, column after column, whole tribes in endless succession with their women and children, issued forth to fight. And ever, at the marvellous tale of cities conquered; of rapine rich beyond compute; of maidens parted on the very field of battle "to every man a damsel or two"; and at the sight of the Royal Fifth set forth in splendour as it reached Medina;—fresh tribes arose and went. Onward and still onward, like swarms from the hive, or flights of locusts darkening the land, tribe after tribe issued forth and hastening northward, spread in great masses to the East and to the West.

Teeming hosts go forth.

It must not, however, be overlooked that though

A.H. 11. apostasy was thus condoned, and in the blaze of victory almost lost sight of, a certain discredit still clung to the repentant backslider. His guilt was not like that of other men who had sinned before conversion. The apostate, once enlightened, had cast by his fall a deliberate slur upon Islam. Therefore no leader who had joined the great Apostasy was ever promoted to a chief command. He might fight, and welcome, in the ranks; was allowed even to head small parties of fifty or a hundred; but to the last, high post of honour was denied.

Discredit still attaching to apostasy.

Arabs the nobility of the Moslem world.

The Arabs, thus emerging from their desert-home, became the aristocracy of Islam. Conquered nations, even of much higher civilisation, when they embraced the faith fell into an altogether lower caste. Arabians were the dominant class, and they alone wheresoever they might go. It was only as "Clients," or dependants, that the people of other lands might share their privileges,—crumbs, as it were, from off the master's table. Yet great numbers of the Arabs themselves were at this early period slaves, captured during the Apostasy or in previous intertribal war, and held in bondage by their fellow-countrymen. Omar saw the inconsistency. It was not fit that any of the noble race should remain in slavery. Therefore, when succeeding to the Caliphate, he decreed their freedom. "The Lord," he said, "hath given to us of Arab blood the victory and "great conquests from without. It is not meet that any "one of us, taken captive in the days of ignorance or in the "recent wars, should be holden in captivity." Slaves of Arab descent were therefore all allowed their liberty on payment of a slender ransom, excepting only bondmaids who having borne children to their owners already held as such, a place of privilege. Men that had lost their wives or children, now set out in search, if haply they might find and reclaim them. Strange tales are told of these disconsolate journeys. But some of the women captive at Medina preferred remaining with their masters.

Slaves of Arab blood set free.

This ascendency, social, military and political, the Arab nation maintained for upwards of two centuries. Then they were gradually supplanted (as we shall see) throughout the East by Turks and Persians. Such as had settled in cities mingled with the people; the rest returned to their desert wilds, and with them departed the glory of the Caliphate. This, however, was not the case in the West; and so in Spain and Africa the prestige of Arab blood survived. A.H. 11.

The domestic history of Medina is at this early period barren of incident. As Judge in civil causes, the Caliph nominated Omar; but warlike operations, first in the Peninsula and then in foreign lands, so occupied men's minds, that for the time the office was a sinecure. Medina.

The Presidency at the Mecca Pilgrimage is carefully recorded yearly by the annalists of Islam. The Caliph was now too much engrossed with the commotion throughout Arabia, to proceed thither himself, and so the Governor of the Holy city presided in his stead. Pilgrimage.

Thus ended the first year of the Caliphate.

CHAPTER VIII

CAMPAIGN IN CHALDÆA

12 A.H. 633 A.D.

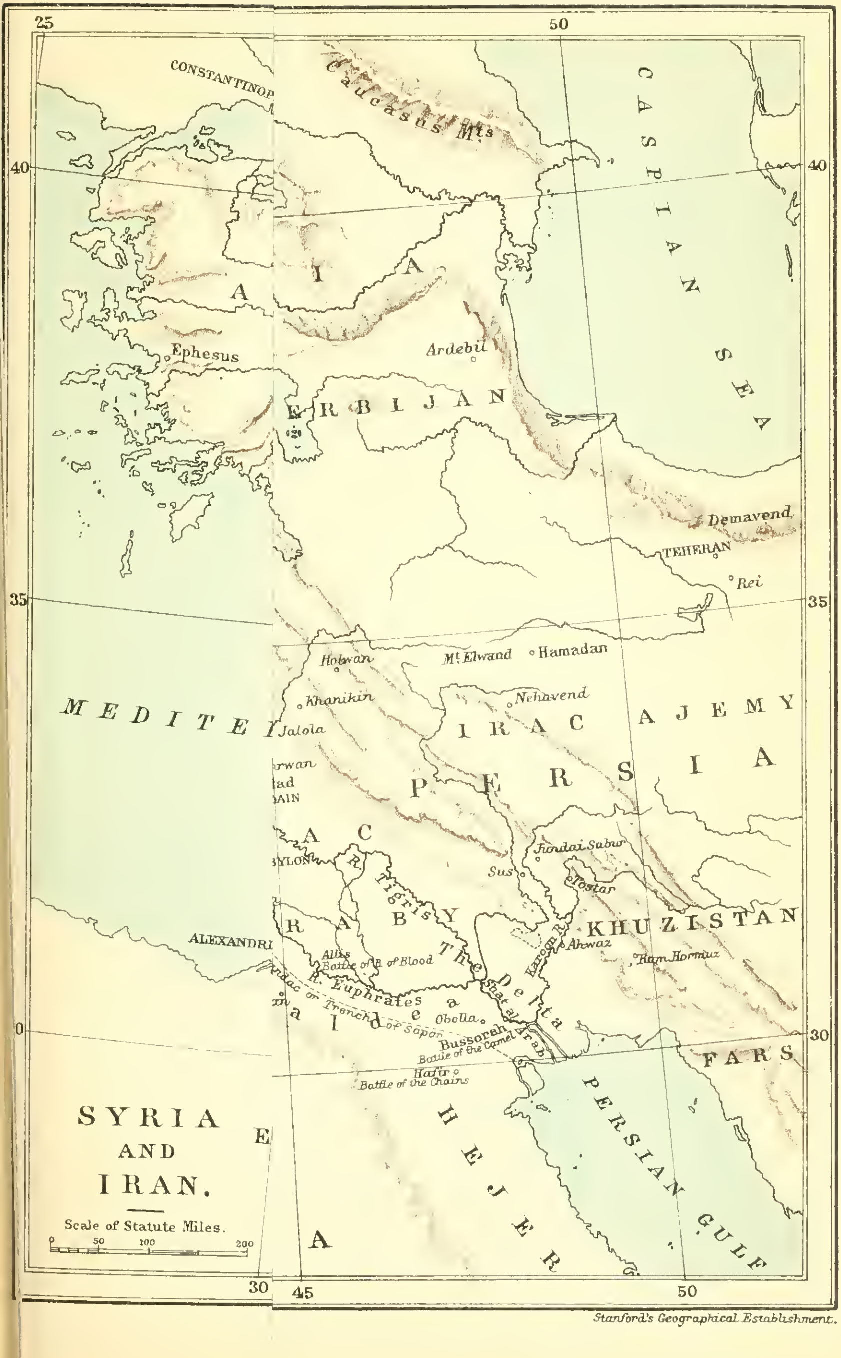
Collision with border tribes led to conflict with Greek and Persian empires.

CHALDÆA and southern Syria belong properly to Arabia. The tribes inhabiting this region, partly heathen but chiefly (at least in name) Christian, formed an integral part of the Arab race and as such fell within the immediate scope of the new Dispensation. When, however, these came into collision with the Moslem columns on the frontier, they were supported by their respective Sovereigns,—the western by the Kaiser, and the eastern by the Chosroes. Thus the struggle widened, and Islam was brought presently face to face in mortal conflict with the two great Powers of the East and of the West.

History dependent on purely Arabian sources.

It is important, especially in the early part of this history, for the student to bear in mind that Arabian sources are all he has to guide him here. Byzantine annals utterly disappear in the impending cataclysm; and it is many long years before any help whatever is available from western chronicles. The Persian empire again was altogether swallowed up in the invasion of the Arabs, and consequently it is from the Conquerors alone that we learn the events about to be told regarding it. Thus, both for East and West, we are entirely dependent on Arabian tradition, which itself at the first is but brief and fragmentary; and moreover, being entirely one-sided, we are left as best we can to draw a narrative just and impartial to all concerned.

In neither of the great Powers which Abu Bekr was about to try conclusions with, had the nerve and virtue of


25
50
40
35
30
45
CONSTANTINOP
Caucasus Mts
CASPIAN SEA
A I A
Ephesus
Ardebil
ERBIJAN
Demavend
TEHERAN
Rei
Holwan
Mt Elwand
Hamadan
Khanikin
Nehavend
MEDITE
Jalola
IRAC AJEMY
PERSIA
rwan
lad
AIN
AC
BYLON
R. Tigris
Jondai Sabur
Sus
Tostar
KHUZISTAN
RABY
ALEXANDRI
Ahwaz
Ram Hormuz
Kanoon R.
Allis
Battle of R. of Blood
The Delta
R. Euphrates
Khandac or Trench of Sapor
Obolla
Shat al Arab
Bussorah
Battle of the Camel
Hafir
Battle of the Chains
FARS
PERSIAN GULF
HEJER
A
E
SYRIA AND IRAN.
Scale of Statute Miles.
0
50
100
200

Stanford's Geographical Establishment.

A.H. 12.

Position of Greek and Persian empires.

earlier days survived. Luxury, corruption and oppression, religious strife and military disaster, had impaired their vigour and undermined their strength. Barbarous hordes overrunning the Western Empire, had wrested the farther provinces from Byzantine rule. Between the Kaiser and the Chosroes again, war had long prevailed. Syria and Mesopotamia, scenes of the coming warfare, being the prize, now of one, now of the other. By the last turn of fortune, Heraclius, marching from the Black Sea, had routed the Persians on the field of Nineveh, and advanced triumphantly to the very gates of the enemy's capital. Siroes, after putting to death his father and eighteen brothers, enjoyed but a few months the fruits of his parricidal crime; and (as we are told by Gibbon) "in the "space of four years, the royal title was assumed by nine "candidates, who disputed, with the sword or dagger, the "fragments of an exhausted monarchy." Such was the condition of Persia, its Court imbecile and anarchy rampant, at the time when Abu Bekr was engaged in his struggle with the apostate tribes. Nevertheless, the Arabian armies met with a fiercer and more protracted opposition on the Persian than on the Syrian side. And the reason is that Islam aimed its blow at the very heart of Persia. Constantinople might remain, with Syria gone, ignobly afe. But if the Arabs gained Irac, Ctesiphon (Medain) lose at hand, must fall, and Persia with it. To this quarter ttention will be now directed.

6 A.H.
627 A.D.

Mothanna attacks Chaldæa.

Among the chiefs who helped to reclaim Bahrein, Mothanna has been already named. Advancing along the Persian Gulf, he reduced Catif, and carried his victorious rms into the delta of the Euphrates. "Who is this Mothanna?" asked Abu Bekr, as tidings of success kept eaching Medina, "and to what clan does he belong?" earning that he was of the great Bekr tribe which peopled hat vicinity, he commanded him to "march forward fighting in the ways of the Lord." The service was such as edouins love; and his column was soon swelled to 00 men. But opposition gathered in front. The hristian and heathen tribes were roused; and Abu

A.H. 12. Bekr, anticipating the impending struggle, resolved that "the Sword of the Lord" should be again unsheathed, and so Khalid was deputed to subdue Chaldæa.

Troops sent to Irac. i. 12 A.H. March 633 A.D.

By the beginning of the twelfth year of the Hegira rebellion had been put down throughout Arabia, excepting the South, which was also in fair way of pacification. It became now Abu Bekr's policy to turn his restless Arab columns to similar work elsewhere. He despatched two armies to the North. One, under command of Khalid joined by Mothanna, was to march on Obolla, an ancient city near the mouth of the Euphrates, and from thence, driving the enemy up the western bank, to work its way towards Hira the capital of Chaldæa. Iyadh at the head of the other, was directed to Duma (midway between the head of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf) which had cast off its allegiance, and thence to pass also on to Hira. Whichever first reached that city was to be in command of the country.[1]

Khalid joins Mothanna in Irac.

Iyadh hampered by his enemy, was long detained in the neighbourhood of Duma. Khalid meeting no such obstacle, was joined on his march from Yemama to Irac by large bodies of Bedouins. These were of the greater service, as his numbers had been thinned, not only by the carnage at Yemama, but also by the free permission given the army, after that arduous campaign, to proceed on furlough to their homes. Nevertheless, the expedition was so popular that when, after a flying visit to the Caliph, Khalid rejoined his camp by the Euphrates, he found himself at the head of 10,000 men; and this besides the 8000 of Mothanna, who hastened loyally to place himself under the great Leader's command.

Mesopotamia and the Syrian desert.

The country before them was in some of its features familiar to the invading army, in others new and strange. From the head of the Persian Gulf across to the Dead Sea stretches a stony desert, trackless and bereft of water. Advancing north, Nature relaxes; the plain, still a wilder-

---

[1] Tradition here probably anticipates the march of events. It is doubtful whether the Caliph had the city of Hira yet in view; for the aims of Khalid and his Master widened as victory led him onwards.

A.H. 12.

ness, is in season clothed with verdure, bright with flowers, instinct with the song of birds and hum of winged life. Such is the pasture-land which for hundreds of miles lies between Damascus and the Tigris. Still farther north, the desert gradually disappears, and about the latitude of Mosul blends with the hills and vales of Asia Minor. Athwart the country from Aleppo to Babylon runs the Euphrates, while the far east is bounded by the Tigris flowing under the mountain range that separates Irac Araby[1] from Persia. Between the two rivers lies Mesopotamia, full of patriarchal memories. Over this great plain there roamed (as still there roam) Bedouin tribes with flocks and herds. The greater part had long professed the Christian religion. Those on the Syrian side, as the Ghassan of Bostra, owed allegiance to the Roman Empire; those on the east were dependent upon Persia. But Nomad life tends to fickle loyalty and laxity of faith; and so, not infrequently, these northern Arabs were now led by affinity with their brethren of Arabia, as well as by the lust of plunder, to desert their ancient allies and ancestral faith, and cast in their lot with the invading columns.

Chaldæa and Delta of the Euphrates.

The lower Euphrates, Irac Araby, is in striking contrast with the region just described. The two great rivers, while yet far from the sea approach each other; but, instead of joining, still keep apart and, for some two hundred and fifty miles running parallel, inclose the memorable plain of Dura. The country is covered with long hillocks and mounds marking the ancient channels of irrigation, and strewed with fragments of brick and pottery, remnants of a dim antiquity. The face of the land was not then, as now, a barren waste, but richly cultivated and watered by canals. On the Tigris, a little below where the two rivers first approach each other, was Medain, "the double city" (so called from Seleucia on the western bank and Ctesiphon on the eastern) then the capital of Persia. Fifty miles farther south, a mass of shapeless mounds, looking down upon the Euphrates from its eastern shore, marks the site of

---

[1] Irac of the Arabs, as distinguished from *Irac Ajemy*, *i.e.* "foreign" or Persian Irac.

A.H. 12. Babylon, and from their summit may be descried the Birs Nimrud, or "Tower of Babel," rearing its weird head on the horizon of the verdant plain. Thirty miles yet farther south lay Hira, capital of the surrounding Arab tribes. It stood (like its successor Kufa) on a branch which issues from the Euphrates by a channel in the live rock, cut by the hand of man but of unknown antiquity. Sweeping along the west, this rival stream feeds many marshes, especially the great lake called the "Sea of Najaf"; and, after a wide circuit, rejoins the Euphrates above its junction with the Tigris. There was in olden times another branch called the "Trench of Sapor" which, intended as a bar to Bedouin incursions, and taking a yet wider range to the west, returned into the parent river near Obolla. This branch, now dry, originally carried a stream which like the other helped materially to widen the green belt pressed in upon by the western sandy desert. The lower Delta again, subject to tidal flow, alluvial, low and watered with ease, is covered with a sea of corn; and from its beauty has been called the "Garden of the world." Besides the familiar palm, the country abounds with the fig, mulberry and pomegranate. But the climate is close and oppressive; the fens and marshes, always liable to inundation, were aggravated by neglect of dams and sluices in those days of anarchy; and so the invading force, used to nothing but the sandy steppes of the Peninsula, gazed wonderingly at the luxuriant growth of reeds and rushes, and at the buffaloes driven by pestiferous insects to hide their unwieldy bodies beneath the water or splash lazily along the shallow waste of endless lagoons. Chaldæa from the estuary upwards was cultivated, as now, by *Fellaheen* or Arab peasantry, and these were lorded over by *Dihcans*, or district officers of the Persian Court.

Khalid summons Hormuz.

Such, then, was the magnificent province lying between the Desert and mountain range of Persia,—the cradle of civilisation and the arts,—which now attracted the Moslem arms. The first to oppose them was Hormuz, Satrap of the Delta, a tyrant hated by his Arab subjects. To him, as master of the tribes gathering in front, Khalid addressed

A.H. 12.

a letter in the haughty type of Moslem summons: "*Accept the Faith and thou art safe; else pay tribute, thou and thy people; which if thou refusest, thou shalt have thyself to blame. A people is already on thee, loving death even as thou lovest life.*" Then placing Mothanna in command of the advanced column, and Adi son of Hatim (the famous chieftain of the Beni Tay) over the second, Khalid himself bringing up the rear, advanced on Hafir the frontier station of the Persian Empire.

Battle of Chains. Hormuz slain.

Startled by the strange summons, Hormuz having sent word to Chosroes the King, himself set out to meet the invader with an army whose wings were commanded by Princes of the royal blood. He marched in haste, thinking to have an easy victory over untrained desert tribes; and being first to reach the water bed of Hafir, took possession of its springs. Khalid coming up, bade his force alight and at once unload their burdens. "Then," said he, "let us "fight for the water forthwith; by my life! the springs shall "be for the braver of the two." Thereupon Hormuz challenged Khalid to single combat and, though he treacherously posted an ambuscade, was in the encounter slain. The Moslems then rushed forward and with great slaughter put the enemy to flight, pursuing them to the banks of the Euphrates. The Arabs had now a foretaste of the spoils of Persia. The share of each horseman was a thousand pieces, besides great store of arms. The jewelled tiara of Hormuz, symbol of his rank, was sent to the Caliph with the royal Fifth. An elephant taken in the field and led as part of the prize to Medina, was paraded about the town much to the wonder of the admiring citizens, but eventually sent back as unsuitable to the place. The action was called "the Battle of the Chains," from a portion of the Persian soldiers being bound together (as tradition contemptuously says) to prevent their giving way.

"The Lady's Castle."

The defeated army fled towards the Capital, and Mothanna with his horse hastened after them. Crossing the Euphrates, he came upon a fortress called "The Lady's Castle," held by a Persian Princess. Leaving his

A.H. 12. brother to besiege it, he advanced to a second fort defended by her husband. This he took by storm, and put the garrison to the sword; which, when the lady heard of, she embraced Islam and, forgetting her Persian lord, gave her hand to Mothanna's brother.

Persians again defeated.

The ardour of Mothanna was near to causing a disaster. When the message of Hormuz reached Medain, the King despatched another Prince with troops to reinforce him. Rallying the defeated army, this force met Mothanna who had been stopped by the Great canal (a branch of the Tigris which runs athwart the Peninsula), and placed him with his small flying column in great peril. Khalid, apprised of the check, hastened to relieve his lieutenant, and just in time. The field was fiercely contested. Again the enemy fled; a prodigious number were either slain or drowned; the remainder escaped in boats. The deep canal stopped further pursuit, but the spoil of the camp was very great. Khalid scoured the country, killing all the men fit for war and taking their women captive. But the Fellaheen or unwarlike peasants, he left unharmed.

Victory of Walaja, ii. 12 A.H. April 633 A.D.

The Court was now thoroughly aroused. Arab invaders, it was said, would best be matched by Arabs who knew their tactics; and so the King raised a great levy of the Bekr and other loyal clans, under a famous warrior of their own. He also summoned Bahman a veteran general, from the east, to command the imperial troops. The combined army in imposing force, advanced to Walaja, near the junction of the two rivers. Leaving a detachment to guard his conquests in the Delta, Khalid marched to meet the enemy. The battle, long and obstinate, was won by the tactics of the Moslem leader, who surprised the exhausted enemy by ambuscades placed in their rear. The discomfiture was complete. The Persians fled; and with them their Bedouin allies, but not until many had been taken prisoners. Flushed with success as he gazed at the scene around, Khalid thus addressed his followers:

Khalid's oration.

—"Ye see the riches of the land. Its paths drop fatness, "so that corn and oil abound even as do the stones in our "Arabian wastes. If but as a provision for this present

A.H. 12.

"life,—let alone the merit of fighting in the ways of the "Lord, — it were well worth our while to do battle for "these fair fields and banish care and penury for ever."[1] Khalid here struck a chord delightful to the Bedouin heart. Now, also, the inducements with respect to the other sex began to tell. Persian ladies, both maids and matrons, as "captives of their right hand" were forthwith, without stint of number, and by permission which they held divine, lawful to the conqueror's embrace; and, in the enjoyment of this privilege, they were nothing loth to execute upon the heathen "the judgment written." Thus religious fanaticism grew along with martial ardour, both riveted by motives native to the Arab—fight and foray, spoil of war, and captive charms.

Battle of Allîs, iii. 12 A.H. May 633 A.D.

The cup, however, had but just touched their lips, and many a chance might yet dash it from them. The great family of the Beni Bekr was divided in the struggle, part holding with Khalid and part with Persia. A bitter feeling was aroused between the Bedouins of Mesopotamia and the Invaders, aggravated by defeat and by the treatment of those taken captive. Smarting under injury, the Christian tribes roused their Nomad brethren on both banks of the Euphrates, and urged the Court of Persia to revenge. Just then, Ardshir the King fell sick, and Bahman was detained at Court; but he sent an army across the Euphrates to join the loyal Bedouins, who from every side flocked to Allîs, half-way between Hira and Obolla. News of this great rising forced Khalid to fall back hastily, and recross the Euphrates. Then leaving a strong detachment at Hafir to secure his rear, he boldly advanced to meet the enemy. The Arab tribes first rushed to the attack, and Khalid slew their leader. Then the Persians with a vast front came up, and the Moslems were hard pressed as they never had been before. The battle was fiercely contested, and the issue at one time was so doubtful, that Khalid vowed to the Lord that in event of victory the blood of his foes should flow as

---

[1] Khalid's speech is quoted by Al Kindy, the Christian Apologist, S.P.C.K., 1887, p. 85.

A.H. 12. in a crimson stream. At last the Persians, unable to withstand the impetuous onset, broke and fled. To fulfil his savage oath, Khalid proclaimed that no fugitive should be slain, but all brought alive into the camp. For two days the country was scoured by the Moslem horse, and a great multitude of prisoners gathered. Then the butchery commenced in the dry bed of a canal, but the earth drank up the blood. Company after company was beheaded, and still the gory flux remained. At last, by advice of an Arab chief, Khalid had a floodgate opened, and the blood-red tide redeemed his vow. There were flour-mills upon the spot, and for three days corn for the army was ground by the reddened flood. We may hope that tradition has magnified the details of this great barbarity; but its memory lived in the name of the "River of Blood" by which thereafter the ill-omened stream was called.

The "River of Blood."

A Persian supper on the field.

The battle over, a sumptuous repast was found ready spread in the enemy's camp to which the Persians, when surprised by Khalid, were about to sit down; — a novel experience for the simple Arabs who handled the white fritters with childish delight, and devoured with avidity rich pancakes and other Eastern delicacies. Khalid ate his supper leaning on the body of a stalwart hero, "the equal of a thousand warriors," whom in single combat he had but just cut down. Tidings of the victory, with choice portion of the spoil, a welcome earnest of the royal Fifth to follow, were at once despatched to Abu Bekr. The Messenger, himself a brave warrior, described the heat and progress of the battle, the feats and prowess of its heroes, the multitude of captives and the riches of the spoil. The Caliph, overjoyed at his glowing tale, bestowed upon the envoy a beautiful damsel from amongst the captive maidens he had carried with him.

Abu Bekr's delight.

The principality of Hira.

For the moment the spirit of the Persians was broken; but their Bedouin allies proved so troublesome to Khalid, and occupied a position from which they could so materially annoy his rear and communications with Medina, that he resolved on reducing the whole tract west of the Euphrates occupied by these tribes, together with Hira, its capital. The Lakhmite dynasty had long ceased to rule over this city, which now for many years had been governed by a Persian Satrap. Partly from its interests being akin to those of the Christian tribes of Mesopotamia, partly from its being a dependency of Persia, the influence of Hira had hitherto been little felt in Arabia proper. But recent events had shown that even the Beni Bekr might combine with the border capital to resist the invader; and to prevent the recurrence of such a danger, Khalid now directed his steps to Hira.

Amghisia sacked.

With this view he advanced rapidly up the western channel of the Euphrates, and surprised Amghisia, a town the rival of Hira in size and wealth. The inhabitants fled, and the booty was so rich that each horseman's share reached 1500 pieces. When the Fifth reached Medina, Abu Bekr was overwhelmed at the sight; "Oh "ye Coreish," he exclaimed in ecstasy, "verily your lion, "the lion of Islam, hath leapt upon the lion of Persia, "and spoiled him of his prey. Surely the womb is "exhausted. Woman shall no more bear a second "Khalid!"

Hira besieged and capitulates.

Finding boats at Amghisia, Khalid embarked his infantry and baggage, and was tracking up the stream to Hira when, the Satrap having opened some irrigating escapes above, the flotilla grounded suddenly. Apprised of the cause, Khalid hastened with a flying squadron to the canal-head, closed the sluices and enabled the boats again to ascend. Then the army, having disembarked and taken possession of the beautiful palaces of the Princes of Hira,[1] encamped before the city walls. The Satrap fled across the river; but the city, defended as it was by four citadels, refused to surrender. The ramparts were manned, and the besiegers kept at bay by the discharge of missiles. A Monastery and cloisters lay without; and at length the Monks and Clergy, exposed to the fury of the besiegers, induced the citizens to capitulate on easy terms embodied in a treaty. Then

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, 1861, vol. i. p. clxxi.

A.H. 12. they brought gifts, which Khalid accepted, and despatched them to Medina. Abu Bekr ratified the treaty and accepted the presents, but desired that their value should be deducted from the tribute.

Treaty with Hira.

The men of Hira bound themselves to pay a yearly tribute, for which all classes, saving religious mendicants, were assessed. The Moslems, on their part, engaged to protect the city from attack. The treaty, though shortly set aside by the rising which swept over the land, is interesting as the first concluded with a principality lying without the Peninsula. One strange condition may be mentioned. The beauty of Keramat had been long proverbial, and a soldier laid claim to her on the ground that Mahomet, hearing him extol her charms, had promised (so the story runs) that when Hira was captured she should be his bride. Khalid insisted that the prophetic promise should be now fulfilled. The thing was grievous to the lady's household, but she took it lightly. "Care not for it," she said, "the fool "saw me in my youth, and hath forgotten that youth "remaineth not for ever." He soon found out that it was even so, and was glad to name a ransom, which having paid she returned to her people.

Hira remains Christian, 12 A.H. 633 A.D.

The occupation of Hira was the first definite step in the outward movement of Islam. Here Khalid fixed his headquarters and remained a year. It was, in fact, the earliest Moslem capital beyond the limits of Arabia. The administration was left with the heads of the city, who were at the least neutral. Khalid, indeed, expected that being of Arab descent, and themselves long ruled by a native dynasty, the inhabitants would actively have joined his cause. Adi, grandson of the poet of that name, was one of the deputation which concluded the peace. "Tell me," said Khalid, rallying him, "whether ye be of Arab or of Persian "blood?" "Judge by our speech; doth that betray "ignoble birth?" "True," answered Khalid; "then why "do ye not join our faith, and cast in your lot with "us?" "Nay," answered the Christian, "that we shall

A.H. 12.

"never do; the faith of our fathers we shall not abjure, "but shall pay tribute unto thee." "Beshrew the fools!" cried Khalid; "unbelief is as a trackless desert; and "the wanderer in it the silliest of mankind. Here "are two guides, an Arab and a stranger; and of the "two they choose the stranger!" The flux and reflux of Roman invasion had, no doubt, loosened their faith in Persia; but the Court of Medain was near at hand and, though in the last stage of senility, sufficiently strong to retain its hold upon a small dependency like Hira. The permanence of Arab conquest, too, was yet uncertain; the love of their ancestral faith was still predominant; and so the city chose to remain tributary. Several centuries later we find the inhabitants of the neighbourhood in considerable numbers still attached to the Christian faith.[1]

Prayer, and Service of Victory.

Public prayer, outward symbol of the dominant faith, was now established; and the Citizens might hear the cry of the Muedzzin, as five times a day beginning with the earliest dawn, it resounded from the adjacent camp. Khalid celebrated his success in a special *Service of Victory*. The occasion was memorable. Clad in a flowing robe girt loosely about the neck, he turned, when prayers were ended, to the assembly and thus

---

[1] The feeling of this Christian principality in losing first their native rulers, and then being swallowed up in the Moslem invasion, is well expressed in these verses sung by one of their poets. Mundzir and Noman were Princes of the Lakhmite dynasty:—

"Now that the Princes of the house of Mundzir are gone, shall I ever again behold the royal herd of camels returning at eve from the pastures of Khawarnac and Sedir?
Now that the horsemen of Noman are passed away, shall I ever again feed the young she-camel on the pastures between Mecca and Hafir?
Like a flock of goats on a stormy day, we are scattered by the Beni Maad (the invading Moslems), even as pieces of camels slaughtered for the feast.
Heretofore our homes were sacred, and we like the teats of a well-filled udder,
Yielding tribute at the appointed times to the Chosroes, and imposts in cattle and gold.
Alas! even so is the changeful wheel of the well of fortune. Now the day ascends with joy and gladness, and now it sinks into darkness and distress."

A.H. 12. extolled their bravery: "In the field of Muta, when "fighting with the Greeks, nine swords were broken in my "hand. But I met not any there to match the foes ye have "encountered here; and of these none more valiant than "the men of Allîs." The early campaign in Irac, indeed, is surrounded by tradition with a special halo; for the loss on the Moslem side had not hitherto been great, and the fighting here could hardly have compared with that of many a well-contested field in the Prophet's time.

Administration of the province.

While Hira was left in the hands of its chief men, summary rule was set up over the adjacent country. The *Dihcans* — great landholders and imperial tax-gatherers — had been waiting upon fortune. Seeing now that Khalid carried everything before him, many began to tender submission and enter into engagements for the revenue. Abu Bekr had wisely enjoined that the Fellaheen should be maintained in possession, and their rights as occupiers of the soil respected. The demand remained unchanged, with the addition only of a light poll-tax. In other respects, the terms, made with the consent and approval of the army, corresponded with those of Hira. Holding their ancestral faith, the people became *Zimmies*, or protected dependants. Khalid undertook to defend them, and they on their part pledged allegiance and bound themselves to give notice if danger threatened. Garrisons were quartered here and there, and the troops held ready in movable columns. Thus the country west of the Euphrates was kept in check, and also the lower Delta to the east. Throughout this region none was secure from rapine but such as had entered into engagements. Hostages were taken for the revenue; and a formal discharge given upon its payment. The tribute, as well as the booty, was all distributed amongst the army "for the strengthening of its will and "emboldening of its courage."

Persia paralysed by internal troubles.

Persia meanwhile was hopelessly distracted. Male progeny near the throne had been so ruthlessly massacred, that no heir of royal blood could anywhere be found, and a rapid succession of feeble claimants was set up by the Princesses left to form the Court. Thus paralysed, the Persians did little more than protect Medain by holding in force the country opposite as far as the Nahr-shir, a deep channel which, drawn from the Euphrates, flowed athwart the Peninsula. This line was threatened by Mothanna; but Abu Bekr gave stringent orders that no advance should be made till all was secure behind. No tidings, moreover, had as yet been received from Iyadh at Duma, with whom co-operation was imperative. Khalid fretted at remaining thus inactive, "playing," as he complained, "for so many months the woman's part." But he curbed his ardour, and contented himself with inditing two letters, in imperious tone, one to "the Princes of Persia," the other to "the Satraps and inhabitants at large."

Anbar.

Towards the north and west, however, aggressive measures were continued. Siege was laid to Anbar, a fortress on the Euphrates some 80 miles above Babylon. The worn-out camels of the army were slain and cast into the deep fosse, which thus was crossed and the city captured. The Persian governor sued for terms, and was permitted to retire. Anbar and the well-watered neighbourhood thus secured, the army attacked Ain Tamar, a fortress on the desert border three days' journey farther west. The Persian troops were here supported by a great gathering of Arab tribes, and among them the same Taghlib levies which had followed their prophetess to Yemama. These met Khalid as he approached but were repulsed, and the Persian governor seeing the rout from the ramparts, fled and left the fugitives to defend themselves as best they could. Refused terms, they surrendered at discretion. The persistent opposition of the Christian Bedouins now led Khalid into an unwise severity that embittered them against him. Their leader was beheaded in front of the city walls, and every adult male of the garrison led forth and put to death; while the women and children were made over to the soldiers or sold into slavery. In a cloister of the church hard by, were forty youths who in their terror barred the door

Ain Tamar.

Khalid's severity.

A.H. 12. Christian students. upon the enemy. When the retreat was forced, they gave themselves up as students receiving instruction in the Gospel. Their lives were spared, and they were distributed among the leaders. The fate of these unfortunate youths, snatched from a Nestorian seminary to be brought up as captives in the Moslem faith, must have been common enough in the rude and sanguinary tide of Saracen invasion; the reason why tradition makes special mention of these, is that amongst them were progenitors of several distinguished men, such as Ibn Ishac the historian, and Musa the conqueror of Spain.

Iyadh at Duma. All this while Iyadh, who ought long before to have joined Khalid, was battling unsuccessfully with enemies at Duma. The Caliph becoming anxious, sent Welid who had been deputed by Khalid to Medina in charge of royal booty, to assist Iyadh, who by his advice despatched an urgent message for help to Khalid. The courier reached just after the fall of Ain Tamar; and Khalid, with no enemy now in the field, answered Iyadh thus in martial verse—

> "Wait, my friend, but for a moment. speedily shall help appear:
> Cohort upon cohort follows, waving sword and glittering spear."

Leaving Cacaa in command at Hira, and starting at once with the flower of his force, he crossed the intervening desert, and made good his word.

Duma stormed by Khalid, vii. 12 A.H. Sept. 633 A.D. He was not a day too soon. Okeidar and Judi, Chiefs of Duma, were supported by the Beni Kelb and other tribes from the Syrian desert; and now the Beni Ghassân were pouring down from the north, under Jabala, the Christian prince of Bostra. The position of Iyadh thus beset, grew day by day more critical. The advent of Khalid changed the scene at once. His very name was a tower of strength. Okeidar had already felt his prowess, having several years before been taken by him prisoner to Medina.[1] Much afraid, he hastened to surrender, but on the way was taken prisoner and beheaded. Then Iyadh on the Syrian side, and Khalid on the Persian, attacked the hostile tribes and utterly routed them.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 429.

A.H. 12.

Jabala effected his flight to Bostra. But the helpless crowd that remained were hemmed in between the two forces and none escaped. The gate of the fort was battered down, and the crowded inmates put promiscuously to the sword. The women were sold to the highest bidder; and the most beautiful of them, the daughter of the unfortunate Judi, was bought by Khalid for himself. Celebrating thus fresh nuptials on the field of battle, he enjoyed a short repose at Duma, while the main body of the troops marching back to Hira, were there received with timbrels and cymbals and outward demonstrations of rejoicing.

Expeditions in Irac, viii. 12 A.H. Oct. 633 A.D.

But all was not going on smoothly in that vicinity. The absence of Khalid had encouraged the Persians and their Arab allies, especially the Beni Taghlib still smarting under the execution of their leader, to resume offensive operations. Cacaa, though on the alert, was able to do no more than guard the frontier and protect Anbar from threatened inroad. At this news, Khalid hastened back; and placing Iyadh in the government of Hira, despatched Cacaa across the Euphrates, while he himself appointed a rendezvous at Ain Tamar to attack the Taghlib tribe; for he had vowed that thus he would crush the viper in its nest. On the eastern bank, the Persians were routed and their leaders killed; while on the western, by a series of brilliant and well-planned night attacks, the Bedouins were repeatedly surprised as they slept secure in their desert homes, cut to pieces, and their families carried off. Thus Khalid fulfilled his vow. Multitudes of women, many of noble birth, were distributed among the army. A portion also, with rich booty, were sent to Medina, and there disposed of by sale.[1]

---

[1] One was bought by Aly. He had recently taken into his harem another girl, one of the captives of Yemama; she was of the Hanifa tribe, and the son she bore him hence called the Hanifite, whose descendants being thus of the stock of Aly, had a political *rôle* of which we shall hear hereafter. He also married in this year a granddaughter of the Prophet the child of Zeinab and niece of his deceased wife Fatima. [There may be some mistake here, for I have read nowhere else of any surviving child of Zeinab, Mahomet's daughter.—3rd Ed.]

A.H. 12.

Battle of Firadh. Persians, Greeks, and Bedouins defeated. xi. 12 A.H. Jan. 634 A.D.

Following up his Bedouin foes, Khalid at last reached Firadh on the Syrian border, and by the river rested his army during the fast of Ramadhan and for some weeks after. But the Byzantine garrison on the frontier, uneasy at the prolonged encampment and threatening attitude of Khalid, and making common cause with the Persian outposts and neighbouring loyal tribes, advanced in imposing force to chase the invader away. They challenged Khalid to cross the river; but the wary General bade them rather come over to the eastern bank. A long and severe conflict ensued. The Moslems were victorious; the cavalry pursued the fugitives, and the carnage must have been great, for tradition places it at the fabulous number of a hundred thousand.

Khalid's incognito pilgrimage, xii. 12 A.H. Feb. 634 A.D.

For the moment opposition was crushed, and no enemy anywhere in sight. The season for the Meccan pilgrimage being now at hand, Khalid formed the singular resolve of performing it incognito,—unknown even to his royal Master. So having recruited his army for ten days on the well-fought field, he gave orders to march slowly and by easy stages back to Hira. Then, making as though he remained behind, he set out secretly with a small escort on the pious errand. Without a guide, he traversed the devious desert route with marvellous sagacity and speed. Having accomplished the rites of Pilgrimage, he retraced his steps from Mecca with like despatch, and re-entered Hira in early spring, just as the Rear guard was marching in. So well had he kept his secret, that the army thought he had been all the while at Firadh, and now was journeying slowly back. Even Abu Bekr, who himself presided at the pilgrimage, was unaware of the presence of his great General. When, after some time, the secret visit came to his knowledge, he was much displeased. But the action which he took in consequence belongs to the succeeding year.

CHAPTER IX

Campaign in Syria. Battle on the Yermuk[1]

12–13 A.H. 633–634 A.D.

Khalid ibn Saîd posted on Syrian border, 12 A.H. 633 A.D.

The campaign in Syria opened under a very different Khalid son of Saîd. An early convert, and as such an exile to Abyssinia, he held high place as a confessor of the faith. Employed as Envoy in the south, he was forced to retreat in the turmoil following the Prophet's death, and now claimed fresh command. Although Omar and Aly doubted his fitness, Abu Bekr ~~overcome~~ by mportunity, sent him to rally the friendly tribes on the Syrian frontier; but unless attacked he was to take no forward step. The Byzantine garrisons, alarmed at his approach, summoned their Bedouin allies and assumed a threatening attitude. Khalid was thereupon permitted o advance, yet cautiously and so as to allow no danger n his rear. Proceeding onwards to the Dead Sea, he outed there a Syrian column; but finding himself so ar away, he called urgently for reinforcements. Just hen the Moslem troops, having crushed apostasy in the outh, were returning in great numbers to Medina, and o were available for any other service. Ikrima with Dzul Kelaa and his Himyar followers, being the first to ppear, were despatched in haste to support Khalid in he north.

Ikrima sent to his support.

Two other Chiefs of note were despatched with a

---

[1] It is well again to remind the reader that our authorities are purely rabian, the entire loss of Syria being recorded by the Byzantine authorities but a few lines. Details, especially of the enemy's numbers, movements, c., must be received simply as rumours handed down by tradition.

A.H. 12-13.

Also Amru and Welîd. End of 12 A.H. Jan. 634 A.D.

similar commission. These were Amru and Welîd, who were away on a joint command given them by the Prophet, in the country between Tayma and the Red Sea. Since the reduction of Duma, this tract having quieted down, Abu Bekr gave them the option either of "remaining where they were, or of engaging in a work "better for them, both in this present life, and in that "which is to come." To this Amru made answer: "I "am but an arrow in the quiver of Islam, and thou "the Archer. It is for thee to pick out the fittest shaft, "and whithersoever thou wilt, discharge it." So they were despatched, Welîd to join Khalid ibn Saîd, and Amru to occupy Ayla and the tract south of the Holy Land.

Khalid ibn Saîd defeated at Marj, near Sea of Tiberias. Beginning of 13 A.H. March 634 A.D.

Emboldened by these reinforcements, Khalid ibn Saîd hastened in the early spring to gain the first laurels of the campaign. Forgetful of his Master's caution, he was in his eagerness decoyed by the Byzantine General towards Damascus. He had reached as far as Marj Soffar to the east of the Sea of Tiberias, when the enemy closed in upon his rear and cut off his retreat. Discomfited, he fled, leaving his camp in the enemy's hands and Ikrima to retrieve the disaster. That able leader rallied the retreating force, and with a sufficient remnant, including the brave Himyar band under Dzul Kelaa, took up a strong position on the frontier until help should come. Khalid continued his flight, but was stayed on the road by a message from the indignant Caliph. "By my life!" he wrote, "thou shalt come no "farther; thou pratest bravely when secure, but in battle "art a coward. I have no patience with thee!" To those about him he said,—"Truly Aly and Omar knew "the man better than I. Had I listened to them, this "mishap had not been." We hear no more of Khalid ibn Saîd.

Reinforcements for Syria

In the present emergency, it was fortunate for Abu Bekr that Arabia being now entirely pacified, he was able as the columns arrived to hurry them off to Syria, there to retrieve the fortunes of Islam. Duly sensible of the gravity of the enterprise,—nothing short of measuring

A.H. 12-13.

swords with the Kaiser,—the Caliph strained every nerve to meet it. He had thrown down the gauntlet, and was waging war at one and the same time, with the Potentates both of the East and West. The brigades now formed for this great enterprise were pitched one after another at Medina on the plain of Jorf, a little way on the Syrian road; and, as each was ready to march, the Caliph walked (as nearly two years before he had done with Osâma) by the side of its mounted Leader, and gave him thus his farewell command;—"Profession is naught "without faith. The merit of a work dependeth on the "purpose of the worker. The reward promised in the "Book of the Lord for such as fight in His ways is "great. Set this ever before thee and before thy men. "But when thou haranguest them be brief, for in the "multitude of words the foremost are lost in the hindermost. So striving, ye will obtain the prize, riches and "honour in the present life, and in the life to come "a great reward." Then with a hearty "Fare ye well," retracing his steps he returned to his simple home.

Addressed by Abu Bekr.

Syrian army.

The force thus brought together differed altogether in composition from the army of Irac. That in the main consisted of Bedouin tribes, which flocked in thousands to the banners of Mothanna and Khalid; the men of Mecca and Medina were amongst them comparatively few; for most had returned to their homes after the battle of Yemama. In the Syrian army, on the contrary, there are reckoned at least a thousand "Companions," *i.e.* men who had seen and conversed with the Prophet, and no fewer than a hundred of the famous 300 of Bedr. These enrolled themselves at pleasure under the Chief of their choice; but once enrolled, they yielded to that leader implicit obedience; while he, on his part, was bound to consult their views and wishes on all occasions of importance. Sheikhs of renown, who but a few years before had wielded the whole power of Mecca, and haughty Chieftains of high descent, now joined with alacrity the column of anyone into whose hands the Caliph was pleased to present the banner of

A.H. 12-13.

command, however young or inferior to themselves in dignity. And the whole force, thus formed in separate detachments, held itself at the absolute disposal of the Commander of the Faithful.

Four battalions concentrated on the Syrian frontier.

Four such battalions were now despatched. *First*, Shorahbîl was appointed to supersede Welîd who was involved in the disgrace of Khalid ibn Saîd. Rallying the scattered fragments of the discomfited force, Shorahbîl now took up the most advanced position. After him followed Yezid son of Abu Sofian, in command of the *Second* levy from Mecca, which included many chief men of the Coreish roused by the Caliph's call, and by the stirring news from Syria. His brother Muavia shortly after joined him with further remnants of the beaten army. Abu Obeida, trusted Companion of the Prophet, led the *Third* column, and posted himself near Amru, who commanded the *Fourth*, in the Wady Araba west of all the others. Many of the new troops, specially the levies from the south, travelled after Bedouin fashion with their families, ready to make the North their abode. For the marvellous conquests of Khalid's army in Chaldæa and their settlement there, had suggested the even more inviting prospect of home in the "Land of blessing and promise" as it is called in the Coran, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Their advance.

The four battalions thus gathered in the spring of the year 634 A.D. on the Syrian border numbered 30,000, besides a reserve of 6000 under Ikrima. In their first advance they met with little opposition and, putting to flight such Arab and Greek troops as occupied the country about the Dead Sea, eventually took up ground in a sort of *échelon*, threatening the garrisons in the south of Syria. Abu Obeida, approaching Damascus, held a position the farthest east, near to Ikrima and the scene of recent disaster. Next came Shorahbîl, overawing Tiberias and the valley of the Jordan. Yezid, in the Belcaa, threatened Bostra; and Amru, in lower Palestine, Hebron. Each of these eventually found himself confronted by a Byzantine force.

For Heraclius was at last alarmed. A few years

Four battalions oppose them.

before he had gloriously repulsed the Chosroes; but after that again relapsed into inactivity. Tidings of the invasion, an irruption, as it would seem, of barbarians from the south, now roused him from his lethargy. Repairing to Hims, he gathered an immense force, and sent it in four divisions to stem the advancing tide. The largest, numbering (as tradition has it) 90,000 men, was commanded by his brother Theodore. The Moslems, startled at this formidable array, consulted how to meet it. Amru urged the commanders to gather in one body.—"For how," he sent to say, "can our scanty "numbers, divided and apart, encounter these mighty "hosts?" To this they agreed, and Abu Bekr, who had constant tidings, was of the same mind. "Draw ye "all together," was his order, "near unto the river "Yermuk. Ye are the Lord's host, and shall surely put "the enemy to flight. Such as ye, shall never be "discomfited by reason of the fewness of your numbers. "Tens of thousands are smitten in battle because of their "sins. Wherefore, do ye eschew sin. Let every man "stand close by his fellow. So shall the Lord give you "the victory."

Abu Bekr's command to draw together.

The two armies at Wacûsa on the Yermuk, ii. 13 A.H. April 634 A.D.

Acting thus, the columns concentrated on a spot south of the river Yermuk, near where it was crossed by the high road from Damascus. The Greeks, suiting their tactics similarly, also drew together, and pitched their camp on the northern bank of the stream. The place was singular. The Yermuk, taking its rise in the high lands of the Hauran, runs in a deep and rugged gorge far beneath the level of the land and, descending rapidly, falls into the Jordan below the Lake of Galilee. The battle-ground was probably some 30 miles above the junction. Here the stream, by fetching a wide compass, left on its northern bank a broad plain,—the field of Wacûsa,—bounded on three sides by a sheer precipice; while the remaining part was shut in by a ravine which nearly closed the circuit. Only a narrow neck was thus available for entrance, through which the highway passing, formed the key of the position. The Greeks, tempted by the wide expanse, entered from the north, and spread themselves out upon the plain. Thereupon the Moslems crossed the river and encamped likewise on the northern bank, upon a spot abutting on the neck, and thus threatening the exit of the enemy. Amru seeing this, rejoiced and said: "Be of good cheer my friends; the Greeks "are shut in, and few that are shut in escape." A desultory warfare ensued, without definite result. The Byzantine troops often formed up in force, and as often were driven back; the ravine was to them a strong protection, and the Arabs gained no material advantage. In such indecisive skirmishing two months passed away, and the armies remained still facing one another.

iii. iv. 13 A.H. May and June 594 A.D.

Khalid transferred to Syria.

Abu Bekr became anxious at the delay and the urgent appeals for reinforcements. It was not so much poverty in number, as lack of fire and military genius, that disquieted him. Abu Obeida was mild even to timidity; Amru an able counsellor, but lacking military dash. The mettle of the Generals had not yet been fully tested; and their independence one of another, in the absence of a General-in-chief, was fatal to common action. When, therefore, the cry reached Medina for help, the Caliph exclaimed: "Khalid is the man for this! "By the son of Welîd, with the help of the Lord, shall the "machinations of Satan and of the Greeks be overthrown." Accordingly, he sent this message to him:—"Depart and "join thyself unto the armies of the Faithful in Syria, for "they are downcast and forlorn. But beware" (referring to his stealthy pilgrimage) "that thou return not "again to do what thou hast done. The Lord helping, "thy removal shall not dishearten the followers thou "leavest in Irac. Go forward, and high resolve attend "thee! Fill up the measure of the Lord's benefits upon "mankind, and He shall fulfil the same on thee. Have "a care, lest the world and the flesh ensnaring thee, "thou stumble and thy works perish. The Lord doth "recompense!"

Sets out with reinforcements.

This mandate disconcerted Khalid at the first. He set it down to Omar who, envying him the conquest of Irac, would thus snatch it from his hand. There was reason for the fear. But had Abu Bekr lived, it had been otherwise, for he continued thus:—"Take with thee half the army, "and leave Mothanna half. When the Lord shall give "thee victory in Syria, then thou shalt return to thy "command in Irac." Reconciled by the assurance, and loyal to his Chief, Khalid began by selecting the Companions and flower of the force which should accompany him to Syria. Mothanna insisted that the division should be equal, and was at last conciliated by securing a goodly portion of the Veterans. The strength of either moiety was about 9000. Mothanna accompanied the great General whom he had served so loyally, to the border of the desert, and taking a last farewell, retraced his steps to Hira.

Marches across the Syrian desert

The Syrian desert lay between Khalid and his new sphere of action. He could not take the northern route, because of hostile tribes and Byzantine garrisons; therefore, turning south, he crossed a second time that waste and tumbled sea of sand, the Nefûd, and halted at Duma. Thence he took the direct road to Syria, and so would in a few more days have reached Bostra, but he feared lest the enemy opposing him there should hinder his junction with the Moslem army. He formed, therefore, the bold design to strike north, right across the waterless and pathless desert, and emerging at Tadmor, so turn the Roman flank. A council of war was held, and a Bedouin guide brought in who said;—"There is but one "way,—a way so bare, and for five days so waterless, "that even single horsemen shun it, lest they perish on "the road." "By the same shall we go," was Khalid's prompt resolve; and when expostulated with on the wild and perilous attempt, he answered that, with divine aid and firm resolve, nothing was wild and nothing perilous. The words fired his followers, and the project was by acclamation carried. "Do this then," said the guide, "if "ye will. Gather as many camels as ye can; withhold "water for a while; then let them drink plentifully, "and drink again a second time; afterwards, bind their

by a perilous route,

A.H. 12–13. "ears and slit their lips so that they ruminate not. So "haply may your water last." At each stage across the wilderness, ten such camels were slain for each troop of a hundred lances. The water drawn from their bodies was mixed with milk for the horses. The men were given but a single draught each day. On the fifth day a shudder crept over the host. The supply was at an end. They had reached the neighbourhood where water should have been, but signs were wanting and the guide at fault. After casting anxiously about in all directions, he cried in despair — "Search for the bramble bush; "the bramble should be here; if ye find it not, we are "lost!" So they searched all round. At last they came upon a half-concealed root; and with loud shouts of "Great is the Lord!" rushed to the spot, dug down into the ground, and found to their joy a plentiful supply of water.

And effects junction with Syrian army, iv. v. 13 A.H. June, July 634.

They were now on the Syrian side of the desert, about a hundred miles east of Damascus. Early next morning, Khalid fell on the astonished neighbourhood, scattering terror all around, and attacking Tadmor which after slight resistance yielded. Then fetching a circuit, he skirted the Hauran within sight of Damascus, and emerged at Adzraat. Having achieved this marvellous journey in the course of a few weeks, and reopened communications with the south, he sent tidings to Abu Bekr of his safety, with the Fifth of spoil taken by the way; and about midsummer effected a junction with the army of Moslems which still lay inactive on the Yermuk.

The two armies compared.

Fresh reinforcements had lately arrived and raised the flagging spirits of the Byzantine army. They numbered 240,000, of whom a portion were felons released for the occasion, and others chained in line that they might not fly, or in token rather of resolve to die. Such are the exaggerated, and it may be fanciful, rumours handed down as, no doubt, current in the Moslem ranks. But whatever abatement is made from them, so much we may readily accept that the army with which

A.H. 12–13.

Heraclius sought to stay the surging tide of Saracen invasion must needs have been very large. We may also believe that though devoid of union, loyalty, and valour, it was well appointed, and elated by its achievements in the Persian war. In discipline and combined movement, and also in equipment, the Byzantine must vastly have surpassed the Arab force. But the Bedouin horse excelled in celerity and dash. Their charge, if light, was galling, and so rapidly delivered that ere the surprise was over, the troop itself might be out of sight. The Byzantine army, it is true, had Bedouin auxiliaries as numerous, perhaps, as the whole Moslem army. But their spirit widely differed. The fealty of the Syrian Arab was lax and loose. Christian in name, the yoke of his faith sat lightly on him. Indeed, throughout the empire, Christianity was eaten up of strife and rancour. With the reinforcements came a troop of Monks and Bishops who, bearing banners, waving gold crosses, and shouting that the faith was in jeopardy, sought thus to rouse the passion of the army. The passion roused was often but the scowl of hatred. Bitter schisms then rent the Church, and the cry of the Orthodox for help would strike a far different chord than that of patriotism in the Eutychian and Nestorian breast. Lastly, the social and ancestral associations of the Syrian Bedouin, alien from his Byzantine masters, were in full accord with his brethren from Arabia; and of such instinctive feeling, the invaders knew well to take advantage. With this lukewarm and disunited host, compare the Moslem in its virgin vigour, bound together as one man, and fired with a wild and fanatic fervour to "fight in the ways of the Lord," winning thus at one and the same time heavenly favour and worldly fortune. For the survivors there was endless spoil, captive maidens, fertile vales, houses which they builded not, and wells which they had not digged. Should they fall by the sword, there was the Martyr's prize of paradise, and black-eyed Houries waiting impatiently for the happy hour. The soldiers' imagination was inflamed by tales

A.H. 12-13.

of heaven opened on the very battlefield, and the expiring warrior tended by two virgins wiping away the sweat and dust from off his face, and with the wanton graces of paradise drawing him upwards in their fond embrace. Of an army, nerved by this strange combination of incentives, divine and human,—of the flesh and of the spirit, faith and rapine, heavenly devotion and passion for the sex even in the throes of death,—ten might chase a hundred of the half-hearted Greeks. The 40,000 Moslems were stronger far than the 240,000 of the enemy.

Moslem army paralysed by separate commands.

The Byzantine army, swollen by its reinforcements, began to overlap the Arabian camp and force it back into straitened quarters. But Khalid's energy soon caused things to mend. In a series of encounters, the enemy worsted, retired behind the ravine in front. Still the prospect otherwise was not encouraging. The battalions of the Arabian host were separately pitched; the conduct of Public prayer (mark of supreme command) was separate in each; the attacks, delivered independently from want of combination, failed. The issue hung fire. A month passed, and Khalid became impatient. To secure success, authority must be vested in a single hand. He saw the fault, and set himself to remedy it.

Khalid obtains Command in chief for the day.

Opportunity soon offered. Unusual movement on the Roman side led to a council of the Moslem chiefs, and Khalid laid his views before them. The Caliph, it was true, had commissioned them to meet each a separate Byzantine army. But the enemy was now massed in one; and Abu Bekr would surely under the altered circumstances approve the assumption of command by a single General. The merit in the sight of the Lord would be the same; not less the merit in the Caliph's eyes. "Come now," said Khalid to disarm their jealousy, "let us vary the supreme control, taking it each in succession for the day, and, if ye will, let mine be first." The proposal thus adroitly made was by acclamation carried. All expected that, with the emergency, the combined control would likewise pass away: but once made, it proved itself so good that the supreme command in Syria was ever after held by a single hand.

A Greek general gained over.

Meanwhile Khalid had sown dissension in the Enemy's camp, and gained over one of its leading men. The facts are obscure, and the episode strange. But so much appears, that a General, Jareja by name, perhaps of Arab blood and Bedouin sympathies, was persuaded to promise that at the decisive moment, he would leave the Byzantine and join the Moslem side.

Disposition of Moslem army.

The powers conferred on Khalid were soon used to purpose. His first care was to reorganise the army. "The Greeks," he said, "are a vast host, and we but few "to look at. Now no disposition swelleth numbers to "the eye like that of squadrons." So he divided the troops into forty squadrons, each about a thousand strong under a trusted leader. These he arranged so that one half formed the centre, under Abu Obeida. Ten squadrons were assigned to each wing, of which one was led by Amru, the other by Yezid. Abu Sofian, now well stricken in years, went about from troop to troop and roused their ardour by martial declamation.

Greek army advances.

It was soon manifest that the Byzantine captains were preparing to deliver a decisive charge. Issuing from their defences, they advanced in volume, darkening both sides of the plain. A bystander, gazing at the moving field, exclaimed, "How many the Greeks, how "few the Moslems!" "Nay," cried Khalid, "rather "'How many the Moslems, how few the Greeks!' for, "if ye count aright, numbers wax by the help of the "Lord, but wane if He withdraw His face. Would that "the Greeks were double what ye see this day, had I "but under me my good Arab!"—for the hoofs of his favourite bay had been worn down by rapid marching from Irac. And still the Greeks kept rolling on in dense columns. The fate of Syria depended on the day.

Moslems advance; tidings from Medina.

As the enemy drew near, Khalid called upon Ikrima with his column, and Cacaa with the veterans from the east, to advance. Just then a messenger from Medina rode up in haste. To the inquiry of men who flocked

A.H. 12 13.

around, he answered shortly: — "All is well; reinforcements on the way." But for the General's ear he had a secret message, and he also handed to him a letter which, hastily glanced at, Khalid slipped into his quiver. Then, unruffled by the startling tidings it contained, and bidding the messenger keep close by him throughout the day, he rode forth to meet Jareja.

Battle of Wacûsa on the Yermuk, viii. 13 A.H. Sept. 634 A.D.

The defection of that General was a calamity for the Greeks, but at the first it caused an unexpected issue. Followed by his escort, the traitor rode forth from the Byzantine ranks to meet Khalid. The unexpected advance was at the first mistaken for an attack upon the Moslems; and a Syrian battalion hastened to its support with such energetic charge that the Arab front was broken and thrown into confusion. Ikrima stood firm. He who in the "days of Ignorance" had measured arms even with the Prophet of the Lord, should he flee before the infidel! "Who now," cried he, "will join me in the covenant of death?" Four hundred, with his own son and the hero Dhirar, took the fatal pledge. He charged, and the battalion which had created the surprise, bewildered now at the treachery of Jareja, fell back. The ground thus clear, Khalid ordered the whole line to move on. The Grecians too advanced, and both sides drew the sword. All day long the battle raged. Fortune varied; and the carnage amongst the Moslems, as well as in the enemy's ranks, was great. Ikrima's gallant company held their ground firm as a rock, and bore the brunt of the fighting; they were slain or disabled almost to a man. So fierce were the Arabs, that even the women fought wildly in the field.

The Moslem victory.

Towards evening the enemy began to falter, and Khalid's quick eye perceived that their horse were declining from the infantry. Thereupon he launched his centre wedge-like between the two, and the cavalry with nothing behind them but a precipice, made a fierce charge for their lives. The Moslem front opened to let them through, and so they gained the country never to reappear. The Arabs then drove down upon the remaining force hemmed in as it was by the surrounding chasm; and thus, pressed right and left, the Byzantine columns were "toppled over the bank even as a wall is toppled over." The battle drew on into the night, but opposition was now in vain. Those that escaped the sword were hurled in living mass into the yawning gulf. "One struggling would draw ten others with him, the free as well as chained." And so, in dire confusion and dismay, the whole multitude perished. The fatal chasm engulfed, we are told, 100,000 men. The Byzantine general and his fellow-captains, unable to bear the sight, sat down, drew their togas around them and, hiding their faces in despair and shame, awaited thus their fate.

Greeks driven over the chasm.

Morning found the Moslems in silent possession of the plain. They flocked into the Greek entrenchment, and Khalid took possession of Theodore's pavilion. The camp and its rich equipage yielded a booty of 1500 pieces to each horseman. More than this, the fearful fate of the army struck such terror into the Byzantine court as well as the people of the land, that the fate of Syria was sealed. The opposition that remained was poor and feeble.

Importance of the victory.

But the victory was purchased at a heavy cost;—three thousand buried on the field, besides a great multitude wounded, and among the fallen many a distinguished name. Of Ikrima's forlorn hope but few survived. The famous Dhirar, badly wounded, recovered to signalise himself on other fields. But Ikrima and his son sank under their wounds. In the morning, when near their end, they were both carried to the tent of Khalid. He laid the head of the father on his breast, and of the son upon his lap, tenderly wiped their faces, and moistened their lips with water. As they passed away, he kept fondly saying: "Alas, alas! the father and the son; who would have thought of a Martyr's death for both!"

Heavy loss.

But Khalid was no longer in command. The messenger in the field had whispered in his ear the news of Abu Bekr's death; and the letter slipped into his quiver brought the new Caliph's order that Khalid should deliver up command into the hands of Abu Obeida.

Khalid superseded.

A.H. 12–13.

Date of battle.

The battle was fought about the middle of the year 13 A.H.—that is, towards the end of August or beginning of September 634 A.D., little more than two years after the Prophet's death.

Before narrating the sequel of this great victory, we must turn for a little to what was passing elsewhere.

CHAPTER X

CAMPAIGN IN IRAC — NEED OF REINFORCEMENTS. MOTHANNA FINDS ABU BEKR ON HIS DEATHBED

FIRST HALF OF 13 A.H. MARCH–AUGUST 634 A.D.

Mothanna attacked by the Persians.

BEFORE he left for Syria, Khalid, seeing that with a diminished force, the situation in Irac would be somewhat insecure, sent away the sick with the women and children to their homes in Arabia. On his departure, Mothanna made the best disposition in his power to strengthen the line of defences towards the Persian Capital. Fresh dangers threatened. A new Prince had succeeded to the throne, who thought to expel the invaders by an army under Hormuz 10,000 strong. Mothanna at once called in the outlying garrisons; but with every help, his force was in numbers much below the Persian. The King, confident of victory, wrote to Mothanna insultingly, that "he was about to drive him away by an army of fowl-men "and swine-herds." Mothanna answered: "Thou art "either a braggart or a liar. But if this be true, then blessed "be the Lord that hath reduced thee to such defenders!" Having despatched this reply, he advanced to meet Hormuz. Leaving Hira, the little force crossed the Euphrates and encamped north of the shapeless mounds that mark the site of Babylon. There, some fifty miles from the Capital, he chose the battle-ground; and, placing his two brothers in charge of either wing, himself at the head of the centre awaited thus the attack of Hormuz. The Persian line was headed by an elephant, which threw the Arab ranks into confusion, and for a while paralysed their action. Mothanna, followed by an adventurous band,

Battle of Babylon. Summer, 13 A.H. 634 A.D.

A.H. 13.

surrounded the great creature and brought it to the ground. Deprived of this help, the enemy gave way before the fierce onslaught of the Arabs who pursued the fugitives to the very gates of Medain. The praises of the "Hero of the Elephant" have been handed down in Arab verse.

Mothanna asks Abu Bekr for reinforcements.

The King did not long survive his defeat. His son succeeding him, was killed in a rebellion caused by the attempt to give a Princess of the royal blood in marriage to a favourite Minister. The Princess, saved from dishonour, succeeded to the throne. From a Court weakened thus by continual change and treachery, there was little, one might think, to fear, but Mothanna had to guard a frontier of great extent, and for the task his army was inadequate. The inhabitants were at the best indifferent; the Syrian Bedouins distinctly hostile. Victories might be won, but could not be followed up. The position, with so small a force, was full of risk. Accordingly, Mothanna urged upon the Caliph the pressing need of reinforcements. He also pointed out the ease with which they might be raised: "Remove the embargo from the "apostate but now repentant tribes," he wrote; "they will "flock to the war, and none more brave or eager." Answer being long delayed, Mothanna ventured to Medina, there to urge his suit in person. He found Abu Bekr on his deathbed. The aged Caliph knew that his end was near; but the mind was clear, and he at once perceived the urgency of the appeal. "Call Omar to me," he said (for he had already named him his successor); and then addressed him thus:—"Command a levy for Mothanna. "Tarry not. If I die, as I may, this day, wait not till the "evening; if I linger on to night, wait not till the morning. "Let not sorrow for me divert thee from this service of "the Lord. Ye saw what I myself did when the Prophet "died (and there could be no greater sorrow for mankind "than that); truly if grief had stayed me then from girding my loins in the cause of the Lord and of His Prophet, the Faith had fared badly; the flame of rebellion "had been surely kindled in the city. And, list thee, Omar!

Abu Bekr on his deathbed desires Omar to order levy.

"when the Lord shall have given victory in Syria, then "send back to Irac its army; for they are the proper "garrison thereof, and fittest to administer it."

Omar accepts the charge.

Omar was touched by the delicacy of these last words, and the allusion they contained; "For," said he, "Abu "Bekr knew that it grieved me when he gave the command to Khalid; therefore he bade me to send back "his army to Irac, but forbore to name the name of "Khalid, or bid me send him back." He listened attentively to the dying Caliph's words, and promised to fulfil them.

CHAPTER XI

DEATH OF ABU BEKR

AUGUST 13 A.H. 634 A.D.

Abu Bekr presides over Pilgrimage, xii. 12 A.H. February 634.

AT the first yearly pilgrimage, Abu Bekr had been hindered by the pressure of rebellion from the journey to Mecca; but the following year he presided at the solemnity himself. As the party entered Mecca, the Citizens hastened to tell the Caliph's father, who, blind from great age, was sitting at his door. On his son's approach, the old man arose to greet him. Abu Bekr made the camel on which he rode kneel down at the threshold, and alighting, embraced his father who shed tears of delight, and kissed him between the eyes. The Governor and other chief men of Mecca approached and shook the Caliph by the hand. Then they did obeisance to him and to his Father also, who said: "These be our "nobles; honour them, my Son, and make much of them." "Make much of them," answered Abu Bekr,—"that I do; "but (mindful of his Master's teaching) as for Honour, "there is none save that which cometh from the Lord "alone." After bathing, he went forth in pilgrim garb, to kiss the Black stone, and encompass the Holy house. The People crowded round him; and as they made mention of the Prophet, Abu Bekr wept. It was but two years since Mahomet had been amongst them, celebrating the same rites. How much of danger and deliverance had come to pass in that short space! And so they mourned his loss. At midday, he again went through the ceremonies of the Kaaba; then, sitting down under the shadow of the Hall of assembly, he commanded

A.H. 13.

the Citizens that, if any had complaint to make, he should speak it out. All were silent; so he praised the people and their Governor. Then he arose and celebrated the Midday prayer. After a little, he bade them all farewell, and again departed for Medina.

Falls sick, vi. 13 A.H. Aug. 634. A.D.

During the summer, Abu Bekr was busied with reinforcements for the Syrian campaign. Simple and temperate in habit, he was now, though over threescore years, hale and hearty. In the autumn, bathing incautiously on a cold day, fever laid him low and obliged him to make over the presidency at Public prayer to Omar. When the illness had lasted a fortnight, his friends became anxious, and said: "Shall we send for a "physician?" "The Physician hath been to me already," was the solemn answer. "And what said he?" "He saith "to me, *I am about to do that with thee which I purpose* "*to do.*" They understood his meaning, and were silent. Aware that the end was near, he made preparation for a successor. The choice was fixed on Omar; but willing to fortify his own conviction by that of others, he first consulted Abd ul Rahman, one of the Prophet's foremost councillors, who praised Omar as the fittest man but withal inclined to be severe.—"Which," responded the dying Caliph, "is because he saw me soft and tender-"hearted. When himself Master, he will forego much "of what thou sayest. I have watched him. If I were "angry with one, he would intercede in his behalf; if "over lenient, then he would be severe." Othman, too, confirmed the choice;—"What is hidden of Omar," said he, "is better than that which doth appear; there is "not his equal amongst us." Talha, on the other hand, expostulated: "If we have suffered so much from Omar, "thou being yet with us, what will it be when thou art "gone to thy Lord, there to answer for having left his "people to the care of so hard a master?" "Set me "up," cried the Caliph, much excited; "seekest thou to "frighten me? I swear that when I meet my Lord, I "will say unto Him, 'I have appointed as ruler over Thy "people him that is the best amongst them.'"

A.H. 13.

Appoints Omar his successor.

Thereupon Abu Bekr called for Othman, and dictated an ordinance appointing Omar his successor. He fainted while it was being written. Recovering, he bade Othman to read it over. Satisfied now, he praised the Lord; "for," said he, "I saw thee apprehensive lest, if I passed "away, the people had been left in doubt." Upon this, he desired the ordinance to be read in the hearing of the Citizens, who had assembled in the court of the Mosque. Omar himself was present, and hushed the noise, that they might hear. Then, desiring to obtain their assent, the dying Caliph bade his wife Asma raise him to the window (for the Caliph's house looked out upon the Court); so she bore him, in her tattooed arms, to the window, from whence, with a great effort, he called out: "Are ye satisfied with him whom I have appointed "over you? None of mine own kin, but Omar son of "Khattab. Verily I have done my best to choose the "fittest. Wherefore, ye will obey him loyally." The people answered with one voice, "Yea, we will obey."

His death, 21st vi. 13 A.H. 22nd Aug. 634 A.D.,

To the end, Abu Bekr's mind was clear and vigorous. On his last day he gave audience (as we have seen) to Mothanna, and, grasping the crisis, commanded Omar to raise, with all despatch, a levy for Irac. During his illness one repeated verses from a heathen poet supposed to be appropriate. Abu Bekr was displeased, and said: "Not so; say rather" (quoting from the Coran)—"*Then the agony of death shall come in truth. This, O* "*man, is what thou soughtest to avoid.*"[1] His last act was to summon Omar to his bedside, and counsel him at great length to temper severity with mildness. Shortly after, he expired with these words on his lips:—"Lord, let "me die a true believer, and make me to join the blessed "ones on high!"

And burial.

Abu Bekr had reigned but two years and three months. According to his express desire, the body was laid out by the loving hands of Asma. He was wound in the clothes in which he died; "for," said he, "new clothes befit the "living, but old the mouldering body." The same Companions that bore the Prophet's bier, now bore that of Abu Bekr: and they laid him in the same grave, the Caliph's head close by his Master's shoulder. Omar performed the funeral service, praying, as was customary, over the bier. The funeral procession had not far to go; it had only to cross the open court of the Sanctuary; for Abu Bekr died in the house appointed him by Mahomet opposite his own.[1]

---

[1] *Sura* v. 18.

Character. Simple life at Al Sunh.

During the greater part of his reign, he had occupied that house. For six months, indeed, after Mahomet's death, he continued to live partly as before in Al Sunh, a suburb of Upper Medina.[2] There he inhabited a simple dwelling with the family of the wife whom he married on coming to Medina, and who shortly after his death gave birth to a daughter. Every morning he rode or walked to the courtyard of the Mosque where Mahomet lived and ruled, to discharge the business of the day, and to perform the Public prayers, Omar presiding if he were absent. For the more important service of Friday, at which an address also was delivered, he stayed in the early hours at home to dye his hair and beard, and dress more carefully; and so did not appear till Midday prayer. Here, as elsewhere, he preserved the severe simplicity of early life, and even fed and milked the household goats. At the first he continued to maintain himself by merchandise; but perceiving that it interfered with the burdens of the State, he consented to forego all other occupation and to receive instead a yearly allowance of six thousand dirhems for household charge.

Removes to the great Mosque.

Finding Al Sunh too distant from the Mosque where, as in the time of Mahomet, public affairs were all transacted, he transferred his residence thither. The Exchequer was in those days but simple. It needed neither guard nor office of account. The tithes as they came in were given to the poor, or spent on military equipage and arms; the spoil of war also was distributed just as received, or on the following morning. All shared alike, the recent convert and the veteran, male and female, bond and free.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 170.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 163.

A.H. 13. As claimant on the Moslem treasury, every believing Arab was his brother's equal. When urged to recognise precedence in the faith as ground of preference, Abu Bekr would reply, "That is for the Lord; He will fulfil the "reward of such, in the world to come. These gifts are "but an accident of the present life." After his death, Omar had the treasury opened; they found but a solitary golden piece, slipped out of the bags; so they lifted up their voices and wept, and blessed the departed Caliph's memory. His conscience had troubled him for taking even what he did by way of stipend from the People's chest; and on his deathbed he gave command that certain lands, his private property, should be sold and a sum equal to that received, refunded.

Mild and gentle.

In disposition Abu Bekr was singularly mild and gentle. Omar used to say there was no man for whom the people would more readily have laid down their lives. He had long been called "the Sighing" because of his tender-heartedness. He was severe in his treatment of the Apostate tribes; but excepting the solitary case in which he committed a brigand to the flames, no act of cruelty stands out against him; and for that he expressed his sorrow. "It was one of the three things which he would wish "undone." The others were, that he had pardoned Ashath when he deserved death; and that when Khalid was transferred to Syria, he had not at the same time sent Omar to Irac. "Then," said he, "I should have stretched out mine "arms, both the right hand and the left, in the ways of the "Lord."

Wives and family.

Unlike his Master, he contented himself with but few wives. Two he had at Mecca before conversion. On arrival at Medina, he married the daughter of a Citizen; and, later on, Asma, the widow of Jafar, Aly's brother, slain at Muta. By all he left issue. There is no mention of any other wives, nor of any slave-girls in his Harem. Of his children, he loved Ayesha best and, in proof thereof, gave her a property for her own. On his deathbed, troubled at the seeming partiality, he said to her, "I wish thee, my Daughter, to return that property, to "be divided with the rest of the inheritance amongst you "all, not forgetting the one yet unborn." His father survived him six months, reaching the great age of ninety-seven.

Simple, diligent, wise, and impartial.

At his court, Abu Bekr maintained the same simple and frugal life as Mahomet. Guards and servitors there were none, nor anything approaching pomp and circumstance. Diligent in business, he leaned upon Omar as his counsellor, whose judgment had such weight, that he might even be said to have shared the government with him. Abu Bekr never spared himself, and he personally descended to the minutest things. Thus, he would sally forth by night to seek for the destitute and oppressed. Omar found him one night inquiring into the affairs of a poor blind widow, whom Omar had himself gone forth to help. The department of justice was made over to Omar, but for a whole year "hardly two suitors came before him." The seal of State bore the legend, *God the best of Potentates.* The despatches were chiefly indited by Aly. Abu Bekr made use also of Zeid (the amanuensis of the Prophet and compiler of the Coran) and of Othman, or any other penman who might at the moment be at hand. In the choice of agents for high office or command, he was altogether free from partiality, wise and discerning in his estimate of character.

Not so strong as Omar.

But he had not Omar's strength and decision; nor was his sense of justice so keen and stern. This is illustrated in the matter of the two Khalids. Upon the one, though warned by Omar and Aly, he was prevailed to confer a command; the disaster in Syria was the consequence. Again, by refusing to condemn the other Khalid for injustice, cruelty, and the scandal of marrying Ibn Noweira's widow, he became responsible for his evil deeds. Yet to this unscrupulous agent—well named *The Sword of God*—was due, more than to any other, the survival and the triumph of Islam. But Abu Bekr was not wanting in firmness when stern occasion called; for example, the despatch of Osâma's army when Medina lay defenceless and all around was dark, showed a boldness and steadfast-

A.H. 13. ness of purpose that, more than anything else, helped to roll back the tide of rebellion and apostasy.

Faith in Mahomet, secret of his strength.

Abu Bekr had no thought of personal aggrandisement. Endowed with sovereign and irresponsible power, he used it simply for the interests of Islam and the people's good. But the grand secret of his strength was faith in Mahomet. "Call me not *the Caliph of the Lord*," he would say, "I am "but *the Caliph of the Prophet of the Lord*." The question with him ever was, What did Mahomet command? or, What now would he have done? From this he never swerved a hair's-breadth. And so it was that he crushed Apostasy and laid secure the foundations of Islam. His reign was short but, after Mahomet himself, there is no one to whom the Faith is more beholden.

Evidence of Mahomet's sincerity.

For this reason, and because his belief in the Prophet is itself a strong evidence of the sincerity of Mahomet himself, I have dwelt at some length upon his life and character. Had Mahomet begun his career a conscious impostor, he never could have won the faith and friendship of a man who was not only sagacious and wise, but throughout his life simple, consistent, and sincere.

CHAPTER XII

ACCESSION OF OMAR—REINFORCEMENTS FOR IRAC. CAMPAIGN UNDER ABU OBEID AND MOTHANNA

AUGUST TO MARCH 13–14 A.H. 634–635 A.D.

Omar's accession, vi. 13 A.H. Aug. 634 A.D.

ON the morrow after Abu Bekr's death, Omar ascended the pulpit, and addressed the people assembled in the Mosque. "The Arabs," he said, "are like a rebellious "camel, and it pertaineth to the driver which way to lead "it. By the Lord of the Kaaba!—even thus will I guide "you in the way that ye should go."

Fresh levies for Irac.

The first act of the new Caliph was to issue the despatch already mentioned, deposing Khalid. The second was, in fulfilment of Abu Bekr's dying behest, to raise a fresh levy for Mothanna. A standard was accordingly planted in the Court of the Mosque, and urgent proclamation made for soldiers to rally round it. Then followed the oath of fealty to Omar, taken by all who were in and around the City. Meanwhile, so great a fear of Persian prowess had fallen on the people, that none responded to the call. Seeing this, Mothanna, who was still at Medina, harangued them in a stirring speech. He told them of his victories, the endless plunder, the fair captives, and the fruitful fields of which they had already spoiled the enemy; "and the Lord," he added, "waiteth "but to give the rest into your hands." Inflamed by his discourse, and stung by reproaches from Omar, men began at last to offer. The first to come forward was Abu Obeid, a citizen of Tayif; then, following him, numbers crowded to the standard. When a thousand were thus gathered, they said to Omar: "Now choose thee, either from the Coreish

A.H. 13-14.

"or from the men of Medina, one of the chiefest to be our "commander." "That I will not," replied the Caliph; "wherein lies the glory of a Companion but in this, that "he is the first to rally round the Prophet? But now "ye are backward; ye come not to the help of the Lord. "Such as be forward to bear the burden, whether light or "whether heavy, have the better claim. Verily I will give "the command to none other but to him that first came "forth." Then turning to Abu Obeid: "I appoint thee over "this force, because thou wast the first to offer; and in "eagerness for battle is the Arab's glory." With this emphatic declaration, he presented to him the standard; but, at the same time, earnestly enjoined upon him ever to take counsel with the other Companions and associate them with himself in the conduct of affairs. So the force started for Irac. Now also Omar removed the ban against the employment of the once Apostate tribes, and bade Abu Obeid to summon to his standard all, without distinction, who since their apostasy had made a good profession. Mothanna, with lightened heart, hastened back in advance of Abu Obeid, and re-entered Hira after the absence of a month.

Abu Obeid appointed commander.

Rustem rouses Persia against the invaders.

During this period further changes were transpiring at the unhappy Court of Persia. Prince and Princess succeeded one another amidst bloodshed and rebellion, till at last a royal lady, Buran, summoned the famous Rustem from Khorasan, and by his aid established herself upon the throne. Proclaimed supreme, the energy of Rustem was soon felt. The nobles rallied round him; great landholders rose against the invaders, and the whole country speedily cast off the Arabian yoke. Two columns were despatched from Medain, one under Jaban to cross the Euphrates and advance on Hira; the other under Narsa to occupy Kaskar on the nearer side. The people flocked to their standard, and the position of the Moslems grew precarious.

Abu Obeid's victory over the

Mothanna called in his forces, still all too few, abandoned Hira to the enemy, and falling back on the desert road to Medina, there awaited Abu Obeid. But he had

A.H. 13-14.

some time to wait. Swelled by Bedouin tribes on the way, and burdened by their families, it was a month before he came up. After a few days' repose, Abu Obeid took command of the combined force, and attacking Jaban, put him to flight. Then crossing the Euphrates, he surprised Narsa, strongly posted by a royal date-grove near Kaskar, routed his army and took his camp in which, with much spoil, was great store of rare dates reserved for royal use. These were distributed among the army, as common food for all. With the Fifth, Abu Obeid sent some of them to Omar: "Behold," he wrote, "the fruit wherewith the "Lord hath fed us, eaten only by the kings of Persia; wilt "thou see the same with thine own eyes, taste it with "thine own lips, and praise the Lord for His goodness in "giving us royal food to eat?" The unfortunate Delta, prey to alternate conquest and defeat, again acknowledged Moslem sway. The neighbouring Chiefs brought in their tribute and, in proof of loyalty, made a feast of good things for Abu Obeid. He declined to partake of it, unless shared equally with his soldiers. A further supply was furnished, and the army sat down with him to the repast.

Persians, viii. 13 A.H. Oct. 634 A.D.

Bahman advances against Abu Obeid.

Enraged at the defeat, Rustem assembled a still larger force under another great warrior, Bahman. The Imperial banner of panthers' skins was unfurled, and an array of elephants sent with the army. Before this imposing host, the Arabian army again fell back and, recrossing the Euphrates, took up ground on the western bank. Bahman encamped on the opposite shore. The field of battle was not far from Babylon, and a bridge of boats spanned the river. Bahman, in his pride, gave Abu Obeid the option of crossing unopposed, and thus of choosing either bank for the impending action. His advisers sought to dissuade him from quitting their more advantageous ground. But Abu Obeid made it a point of honour;—"Shall we fear "death more than they?" he cried, as he gave the order at once to cross. They found the ground upon the farther side confined; and, though they were under 10,000, there was little room to manœuvre, and nothing but the bridge to fall back upon. The unwieldy elephants, with jingling

A.H. 13-14. bells and barbaric trappings, spread confusion among the Arab cavalry. The riders, however, dismounting, went bravely at them, and tried, with some success, to cut the bands of the litters, and drive them from the field. Abu Obeid himself singled out the fiercest, a white elephant with great tusks, and rushed at it sword in hand. Vainly endeavouring to reach some vulnerable part, the huge beast caught him with its trunk, and trampled him to death. Consternation seized the ranks at the horrid spectacle. One after another, the captains whom Abu Obeid had named to take command in case of disaster, were slain, and the troops began to waver. Just then a soldier, appalled at the fate of his leaders, ran to the bridge, and crying,—*Die, as your Chiefs have died, or conquer,*—cut the first boat adrift. Retreat closed, the panic spread. The Moslems, hemmed in, were driven back upon the river. Many leapt into the deep swift stream, but few reached the other shore. At this eventful moment Mothanna rushed to the front. Backed by a few heroic spirits, among them a Christian chief of the Beni Tay, he seized the banner and, planting himself between the enemy and the bewildered Arabs, called out that he would hold the ground till all had passed over. Then he chided the author of the calamity, and commanded the bridge to be restored. "Destroy not your ownselves," he cried; "retire in order, "and I will defend you." While thus bravely holding the Persians at bay, the thrust of a lance imbedded the rings of his armour in a deep and dangerous wound. Heedless of it, he stood to his ground, endeavouring to calm the panic-stricken force. But in vain. The confusion increased, and before order could be restored, vast numbers had perished in the river. At last, the bridge repaired, a remnant escaped across; but 4000 were swept off by the flood, left dead upon the field, or borne wounded away. Of the new levies, some 2000, stung with remorse, fled from the terrible field back to Arabia; and Mothanna, again assuming the command, was left with only 3000 of his men. After the battle, Bahman was on the point of crossing the river to follow up his victory. Had he done

Battle of the Bridge. Abu Obeid slain and defeated, viii. 13 A.H. Oct. 634 A.D.

so, it would have fared badly with Mothanna and the disheartened remnants still holding their ground on the opposite bank. But fortunately at the moment, news reached Bahman of a revolt at Medain; and so, relinquishing his design, he hastened away to the distracted capital. Mothanna fell back upon Allîs, farther down the river, and fixing headquarters there, bravely defended his early conquests amongst a people now not unfriendly to the Moslem cause. Jaban, unaware of Bahman's hasty recall, fell into Mothanna's hands and with his followers was beheaded. Things, no doubt, looked dark; but a hero like Mothanna was not one to despair. As on his first advance, so now he sought to recruit the diminished ranks from kindred tribes about him; and, before long, regained a firmer footing.

Mothanna retires with remnant to Allîs.

Omar received with calmness the unhappy tidings. Abu Obeid's levies kept on their flight till they reached home; and some who belonged to Medina returning thither, covered their faces with shame. The Caliph spoke comfortably to them thus:—"Verily, I am a defence "to every believer that faceth the enemy, even if "trouble overtake him. The Lord have mercy on Abu "Obeid, and be gracious unto him. Had he survived, and "taken refuge on some sandy mound, I surely would have "been his advocate and his defender." Muâdz, famous as a reciter of the Coran, was among those who fled. Shortly after, in the course of public recitation, he came to the verse: "Whosoever in the field shall give his back to the "enemy (excepting again to join in battle), or shall turn "aside unto another party, verily he draweth the wrath "of God upon himself; his refuge shall be hell-fire—an "evil end!" and he lifted up his voice and wept. Omar addressed him kindly: "Weep not, O Muâdz, thou hast "not *turned aside unto another party*; thou hast turned "aside to none but unto me." Such was the spirit of these Moslem heroes, even in defeat. The reverse had no other effect than to nerve the Caliph to redoubled effort. The fresh cry for a levy *en masse* soon resounded all over the Peninsula. But reinforcements in response would have

Omar's calm reception of the tidings.

Summons for a fresh levy.

A.H. 13-14.

been too late to help Mothanna if (fortunately for Islam) earlier succour had not reached him.

Numerous reinforcements join Mothanna,

For the previous call was still drawing. Levies, from every quarter, daily reached Medina, eager—now the ban against Apostasy was removed—to show the sincerity of their repentance, and share in the rewards of victory. Each band as it came, besought Omar to send them to the favoured land of Syria. But the late victory on the Yermuk had made him easy in that direction; and every available man must now be hurried forward to Irac. A brave levy raised under the banner of Jarîr, urged that their ancestral relations were all with Syria; but Omar was firm, and at last reconciled them to set out at once for Persia by the promise that they should have one-fourth of all the royal Fifth of booty taken there. The fugitives also hastened back, seeking to retrieve their honour. But the most remarkable was a Christian tribe of the desert, which, without detriment to their faith, threw in their lot with the Moslems, and brought a contingent to their help. Thus, rapidly reinforced, Mothanna was soon stronger than ever, and ready for offensive movement. His troops were massed at first on the edge of the Arabian desert, near Khaffan. The women and children (for the practice was now common of carrying with the army house and home) were placed in security at a distance behind; some were even left with friendly citizens in Hira, although, since the last retreat, the city had been reoccupied by a Persian Satrap. Mothanna had also a trusty follower in hiding there, to give him notice of what was passing in the City.

Who advances against Persian army.

From this spy, Mothanna now learned that, matters having been settled at the Capital, a great army was in motion against him. Sending an urgent message to Jarîr, now close at hand, to hurry on, he marched forward to Boweib on the western branch of the Euphrates and there, close by the future site of Kufa, and on ground approached by a bridge, awaited the enemy. Omar had cautioned him not again to risk his men by crossing the river before victory was secure; so he suffered the enemy undisturbed

A.H. 13-14.

to defile their troops across the bridge. The Persians advanced in three columns, an elephant defended by a company of footmen at the head of each, and all with tumult and barbaric din. It was the fast of Ramadhan; but under special dispensation the troops had been strengthened by a full repast. Mothanna, on his favourite charger (humorously called *the Rebel*, from its docility in action), rode along the lines, and exhorted his soldiers to quit them like men: "Your valour this day shall be a "proverb. Be still as death, and if ye speak one to the "other, speak it in a whisper. None amongst us shall "give way this day. I desire not glory for myself, but "glory for you all." And they answered him in like words; for he was beloved by his men.

Battle of Boweib, ix. 13 A.H. Nov. 634 A.D.

The signal was to be the Takbir, or cry of *Great is the Lord*, repeated thrice; then, at the fourth, the general advance. But Mothanna had barely shouted the first, when the Persian myrmidons bore down; and the nearest column broke before them. Mothanna pulled his beard in trouble. Calling an officer, he bade him hasten with this message to the wavering corps: "The Ameer sendeth greeting, and "saith, *Ye will not this day shame the Moslems!*" They gave answer, "Yea, we shall not!" And, as the broken ranks closed again in serried line, Mothanna smiled approvingly. The battle raged long and equally. At last, Mothanna, seeing that a desperate onset must be made, rode up to the Christian chief, and said: "Ye are "one blood with us; come now, and as I charge, charge "ye with me." The Persian centre quivered before the fierce onslaught, and as the dust cleared off it was seen to be giving way. The Moslem wings hitherto outflanked, now took heart, and charged. Then the Persian army fell back, and made for the bridge. Mothanna however swept before, and cut them off. In despair, they turned on their pursuers. But the fiery zeal of the Arabs, though a handful in comparison, beat back the forlorn charge. "The enemy," says an eye-witness, "driven before us, were brought up "by the river and finding no escape, re-formed and "charged again. One cried to our Leader to hold his

A.H. 13-14. "banner back; *My work,* he answered, *is to move the* "*banner on.* So forward we drove, and cut them up, "not one reaching even to the river bank." Mothanna reproached himself afterwards with having closed the bridge, and caused useless loss of his men. "I made a "grievous error," he confessed; "follow not my example "herein; it behoveth us not to close the way against such "as may be driven to turn upon us in despair." The carnage was almost unparalleled even in the annals of Islam, and it went on into the night. A hundred warriors boasted that they slew each ten men to his lance; hence the battle has been called *The field of Tens.* No engagement left marks wider or more lasting. For ages bones of the slain bleached the plain; and the men of Kufa had here, at their very door, lasting proof at once of the prowess and the mercilessness of the first invaders.

Enemy routed with terrible carnage.

Victory helped by Christian Arabs.

The victory is remarkable as gained in part by the valour of a Christian tribe. And yet further, the gallantest feat of the day was achieved by one of another Christian clan; for a party of Bedouin merchants with a string of horses for sale, arriving just as the ranks were being dressed, threw themselves into the battle on the Arab side. A youth from amongst them darting into the centre of the Persians, slew the Leader and leaping on his richly caparisoned horse, rode back crying, as he passed in triumph amidst the plaudits of the Moslem line: "I am of the Beni Taghlib. I am he that hath "slain the Chief."

Moslem loss.

The loss on the Moslem side was considerable. Mothanna mourned the death of a Brother who, when borne from the field mortally wounded, cried: "Exalt "your banners ye Beni Bekr, and the Lord will exalt "you, my men; let not my fall disturb you!" The Christian chieftain met a similar fate. Mothanna affectionately tended the last moments of both—the Christian and the Moslem—an unwonted sight on these fanatic fields. He performed the funeral service over his Brother and the other fallen Moslems, and said in his panegyric: "It assuageth my grief that they stood "stedfast; they yielded not a step; and now here they "lie, the Martyrs of Boweib."

The spoil. The spoil was great. Immense stores of grain and herds of cattle were captured. Supplies were sent to the families in their retreat; but as the convoy rode up, the women mistaking it for a hostile raid, rushed out with their wild Arab scream, and attacked it with stones and staves. The Leader soon made himself known, and praised their courageous bearing. "It well becometh the "Wives of such an army," he said, "thus to defend them-"selves." Then he told of the victory; "and lo," pointing to the stores of grain, "the first-fruits thereof!"

Country reoccupied. The country was now ravaged without let or hindrance to the very walls of Medain. The enemy's garrisons were driven back; and lower Mesopotamia and the Delta occupied anew. Parties scoured the country higher up, and many rich markets were ransacked. They penetrated to Baghdad (then a mere village on the Tigris), and even as far north as Tekrit. Great booty was gathered in these plundering expeditions, to be divided in the usual way.

Mothanna lived but a few months after his last great victory. He never entirely recovered from his wounds received at the battle of the Bridge, and eventually succumbed. His merits have not been recognised as they deserve. That he did not belong to the Nobility of Islam was the misfortune which kept him in the background. Jarîr declined to serve under him, a common Bedouin like himself,—not even a Companion of the Prophet; and complained accordingly to the Caliph. Omar, as we shall see, listened to the appeal; and eventually appointed another Commander over both. But before entering on a new chapter in the Persian war, we must revert in our next, to the course of events in Syria.

Mothanna. The character of Mothanna, however, deserves more than a passing notice. Among the generals who secured the triumph of Islam, he was second only to one. Inferior to Khalid in dash and brilliancy of enterprise, he did not

A.H. 13-14. yield to him in vigour and strategic skill. Free from the unscrupulous cruelty of that great Leader, we never hear of his using victory to gratify private ends. It was due alone to the cool and desperate stand which Mothanna made at the Bridge, that the Moslem force was not utterly annihilated there; while the formation so rapidly afterwards of a fresh army by which, with the help of Christian tribes (rare mark of Moslem liberality in contrast with the bigotry of later days) a prodigious host was overthrown, showed powers of administration and generalship far beyond his fellows. The repeated supersession of Mothanna cost the Caliphate much, and at one time even rendered the survival of Islam in Irac doubtful; but it never affected his loyalty to Omar. The sentiment of the day may have rendered it difficult for the Caliph to place a Bedouin of obscure origin in command of men who as Companions, had fought under the Prophet's very banner. But it is strange that no historian, jealous for the honour of the heroes of Islam, has regretted the supersession of one so distinguished in its annals, or sought to give Mothanna his deserved place as one of the great Generals of the world.

CHAPTER XIII

CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA. TAKING OF DAMASCUS. BATTLE OF FIHL

13–14 A.H. 634–635 A.D.

Army on the Yermuk.

AFTER the terrible slaughter at Wacûsa, we left the Moslem army on the banks of the Yermuk, burying their dead, tending the wounded, and dividing the spoil.

Country east of the Jordan.

The country in which they were now encamped,—"the "land beyond Jordan on the east,"—differed from any they had previously known. Away to the south were the pastoral tracts of the Belcaa, and again to the north the pasture-lands of Jaulan. Between the two lay the hills and dales of Gilead, with fields of wheat and barley, dotted here and there with clumps of shady oak, olive and sycamore, and thickets of arbutus, myrtle, and oleander. It was emphatically "a good land, a land of brooks of "water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys "and hills." The landscape, diversified with green slopes and glens, is in season gay with carpeting of flowers and melody of birds. From the green high lands above the Yermuk may be descried the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee sparkling in the west, and away in the north the snow-capped peaks of Lebanon and Hermon;—striking contrast to the endless sands and stony plains of Arabia. Not less marked is the contrast with Chaldæa. There the marshy Delta displays a tropical luxuriance, while the plains abound with desolate sites of cities that flourished in early cycles of the world, strewn with fragments of pottery and bricks of strange device, mysterious records of bygone kingdoms. Here the pride of the Byzantine

A.H. 13-14. empire was yet alive. Skirting the Jordan were busy cities founded by the Romans that boasted Church and Theatre and Forum. Even naval contests of the Naumachia might be witnessed in the land of Gilead. The country was populous and flourishing, inhabited by a mongrel race, half Arab half Syrian, who aspired to the privileges and aped the luxurious habits, without the chivalry or manliness, of the Roman citizen. It was altogether a civilisation of forced, and of exotic, growth. No sooner was the western prop removed than the people returned to their Bedouin life, true sons of the desert; the chariot and waggon were banished for the camel; and nothing left of Roman rule but columns and peristyles, causeways and aqueducts, great masses of ruined masonry,—which still startle the traveller as if belonging to another world. But, at the time we write of, the age of so-called civilisation was still dominant there. Such was the beautiful country, strange to the southern Arab both in natural feature and busy urban life, which was now traversed by the invading armies and soon became the beaten highway between Syria and the Moslem shrines.

Abu Obeida succeeds Khalid, viii. 13 A.H. Sept. 634 A.D.

Having achieved the victory of Wacûsa, Khalid at once delivered to Abu Obeida the despatch from the new Caliph put into his hands (as we saw) at the commencement of the action, and with it surrendered the commission which he held from Abu Bekr. The other leaders were confirmed in their commands by Omar. The affront thus put upon Khalid did not damp his loyalty or zeal. He placed himself forthwith at the disposal of the new Commander, who published with reluctance the order of his deposition. Abu Obeida knew full well the rare military genius of Khalid; and, himself of a mild and unwarlike turn, was wise and magnanimous enough to ask, and as a rule implicitly to follow, his advice. Khalid, nobly putting aside the grievance, devoted his best energies to the service of the State; and, his supersession notwithstanding, remained virtually the chief Captain of Islam in the west.

The course of Moslem victory in Syria advanced with little let or hindrance. Persia's struggle was not for a limb, but for life itself. Here it was otherwise. Syria, indeed, contained the Holy places, and what was dear to the Greeks as the cradle of their faith. But after all, it was, though fair and sacred, but an outlying province of which a supine and selfish Court could without vital injury afford the loss. There were no such mortal throes in Syria as on the plains of Chaldæa.

A.H. 13-14.

Byzantine opposition faint in Syria.

Leaving a strong detachment on the Yermuk to keep communication open, the invading army resumed its northward march. On the way, news came that Damascus had been reinforced, and that in Palestine the scattered fragments of the defeated army had re-formed in the valley of the Jordan, thus threatening the Moslem rear. The moment was critical, and Abu Obeida wrote for orders to the Caliph. The answer was to strike a decisive blow at Damascus;—the Citadel of Syria gained, the rest was sure. Accordingly, a strong column was sent back to hold in check the enemy on the Jordan, while the main body advanced by the military road upon Damascus.

Advance on Damascus.

This City, the most ancient in the world, has, ever since the days of Abraham, survived through all vicissitudes the Capital of Syria. The great plain on which it stands is watered by streams issuing from adjoining mountain ranges; and the beautiful groves and rich meadows around have named it (with more reason than the Chaldæan delta) the "Garden of the world." An *entrepôt* of commerce between the east and west, it has been from age to age with varying fortune, ever rich and populous. The city wall, twenty feet high and fifteen broad, still contains stones of cyclopean size that must have been builded in ages before our era. Over the gates and elsewhere there are turrets for defence, all of venerable structure. The traveller entering at the eastern gate may even in the present day pass through the narrow "street which is called Straight," as did St. Paul 1800 years ago. The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist still rears its great

Damascus.

A.H. 13-14. Dome, towering above all other buildings; and besides it there were, at the time of which we write, fifteen churches in the City and its suburbs. Not long before, Damascus had suffered severely from the alternating fortunes of the Persian war; but had now, in great measure, recovered its prosperity.

Damascus bursts in view of the invading army.

Such was the Capital of Syria, "Queen of Cities," which in all its radiance, surrounded far off by lofty mountains tipped with snow, now burst on the gaze of the Arab warriors. Some amongst them may perchance have visited it trading to the north; but as a whole, the army had heard of it only by report; and in beauty, richness and repose, fancy could hardly have exceeded the scene now stretched before them.

City invested, x. 13 A.H. Dec. 634 A.D.

The Arab force was strong enough to invest the city. Abu Obeida pitched his headquarters on the western plain. Khalid took ground at the eastern entrance, where the gateway was strengthened by the remains of an ancient temple. The other gates were similarly guarded. Battering-rams were drawn up against the walls; but every attempt at a breach of the massive defences failed. At first the Citizens, ignorant of the ardour and persistence inspired by the faith of Mahomet, regarded the attack as a desultory Bedouin raid like many before it, and looked for succour. The City lies two thousand feet above the sea, and the severity of the cold in spring would, no doubt, drive away the Arab tribes, used to a more genial climate. But months passed, and the host still hung obstinately around the walls. The Emperor, indeed, from Hims, attempted a diversion; but Dzul Kelaa, posted with his Himyar horse to the north of the City, kept the enemy at bay; and another column covered the besiegers from annoyance on the side of Palestine. The summer was coming on, and no relief appeared. The Moslems, instead of retiring, pressed their attack with increasing vigour; and the hopes of the Damascenes began to melt into despair.

On a certain day the Governor made a feast to the garrison. They ate and drank and, relaxing into merri-

A.H. 13-14.

Storm and capitulation.

Summer, 14 A.H. 635 A.D.

ment, began to quit their posts. Khalid knew of the entertainment, for nothing escaped his vigilance;—"he neither slept himself, nor suffered others to fall asleep." And so, reckoning upon the season of revelry, he settled with Abu Obeida to seize it as the occasion for a general assault. The defences on Khalid's side were by far the most formidable; the moat was deeper and the walls were stronger. The garrison at the spot, holding it impregnable, were less on the alert than elsewhere; and in their negligence Khalid found his opportunity. In concert with certain daring spirits, comrades from Irac, he planned an escalade. Ladders were got in readiness, and scaling ropes with nooses to catch the projections of the castellated wall. In the darkness preceding dawn, they stealthily crossed the well-filled moat upon inflated skins; then, casting up their tackle, caught the battlements. The way thus silently secured, numbers scaled rapidly. Right and left they surprised the slumbering pickets and put them to the sword. The gate from within was forced open, and the appointed cry "*Allah Akbar!*" resounded from the walls to the expectant troops without. The Byzantine soldiery, panic-struck, fled before their assailants; and now through the gateway Khalid's column poured in, slaying and sacking all around. They had already penetrated near to the centre of the City, when their brilliant advance was brought to an unwelcome end. For on the other side a very different scene was taking place. The Governor, seeing that resistance to a general assault was hopeless, had issued from the western gate, and already tendered his submission to Abu Obeida. Terms were made upon the spot, and capitulation signed. The gates were thrown open, and the Moslem force, unopposed, kept streaming in from the western camp. As they advanced, cries of despair and appeals to stay the carnage met the ears of Abu Obeida, who no sooner heard what had transpired in the eastern quarter than he sent orders to stay the onslaught. Khalid remonstrated that the City had been fairly carried by assault, and was at their mercy; but in vain. Abu Obeida, juster and more clement, pointed to the treaty, and insisted

A.H. 13-14.

that its provisions should be fulfilled. Good faith was the best, as well as fairest, policy. The people were conciliated, and throughout Syria the capitulation of Damascus became the type of surrender.

Terms of capitulation.

One half of all the property, both money and buildings, private and public, was by this capitulation surrendered to the Conquerors. Besides the taxes levied under Byzantine rule, the tribute of one golden piece was imposed on every male adult who did not embrace Islam, and a measure of corn taken from every field. In this way the Arabs gained, not only large spoil and permanent revenue, without alienating the people and even with a show of moderation, but obtained also possession of buildings sufficient for their own accommodation and for the conduct of public business. And so this beautiful city, "the Eye of the East," passed from the grasp of Heraclius into the hands of the Caliph, and became "the Eden of Islam."

Church of St. John turned into a Mosque.

The churches of Damascus shared the common fate, and were equally divided between the Christians and the Conquerors. The Cathedral church of St. John the Baptist was separated into two. In one half the rites of the ancient faith continued to be celebrated, and the gospel of Jesus read; in the other half, carefully detached, the Coran was recited and the service of Islam observed; while from the dome the Muedzzin proclaimed daily the supremacy of the Arabian Prophet. For some eighty years the great Cathedral continued thus to shelter under one friendly roof the symbols and practice of both Religions. But that which was reasonable in the first beginnings of Islam, became intolerable in the rapid advance of arrogance and bigotry. One and another of the Caliphs sought, by offer of large payments, to obtain surrender of the entire Cathedral; but in vain. At last Welîd, about the 90th year of the Hegira, took the law into his own hands, and summarily ejected the Christian worshippers. They complained against the injustice, and Omar II listened to their reclamation. But the Doctors of Islam declared it impossible to restore to Christian worship a place once consecrated by the Idzân and prayers of the Faithful;

A.H. 13–14.

and so at last the Christians consented to take, instead, the Churches of the City and its suburbs which had been confiscated under the equal partition of Abu Obeida. All that appeared Christian, therefore, in the style or decoration of the Cathedral church was now removed or defaced. But this wonderful edifice retains to the present hour marks of the different religions to which it has been devoted. In the massive foundations may be traced signs of a pagan Temple; these are surmounted by the architecture and embellishments of Byzantine art; and over the great entrance may still be deciphered the grand prophecy of the Psalmist, which may yet again be chanted within its walls, running thus:—

> THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST,, IS A KINGDOM OF
> ALL AGES; AND THY DOMINION IS FROM
> GENERATION
> TO GENERATION.[1]

Greeks in valley of Jordan held in check. Spring 13 A.H. 634 A.D.

All through the siege, Abul Aur guarded the army from attack on the south. He was pitched in the valley of the Jordan, near Fihl (the ancient Pella) which lay on the eastern slope of the valley, a few miles below the Lake of Tiberias. Ruins still mark the site 600 feet above the river bed. The basin of the Jordan is here broad and fertile, and the stream in many places fordable. Opposite Fihl, the vale of Jezreel, branching off from the plain of Esdraelon, opens into the Jordan valley. The broad approach is guarded on one side by the mountains of Gilboa the scene of Saul's disaster, and on the other by the frowning eminence of Beisan, to the walls of which

---

[1] The following is the inscription, being the Septuagint version of Psalm cxlv. 13, with the addition only of the words, *O Christ*:—

> Η ΒΑCΙΛΕΙΑ . COΥ Χ̄Ε̄ ΒΑCΙΛΕΙΑ . ΠΑΝΤΩΝ . ΤΩΝ
> ΑΙΟΝΩΝ . ΚΑΙ . Η . ΔΕCΠΟΤΕΙΑ . COΥ . ΕΝ . ΠΑCΗ .
> ΓΕΝΕΑΙ
> ΚΑΙ ΓΕΝΕΑΙ.

[Since the above was written the great edifice was burned down; but the inscription remains uninjured. The Mosque has been since repaired. 3rd Ed.]

A.H. 13-14. the Philistines fastened his body.[1] Mountain streams run along the valley, making it at times a sodden swamp. It was under the shadow of Beisan that the broken fragments of the Byzantine army took refuge, and were joined there by fresh supports. To secure their front, they dammed the streams, and so turned the whole vale into a marsh. At first the Arabs chafed under the stratagem, for their horses were disabled in the yielding ground. But they soon discovered that the enemy had shut himself in from exit, as well as from attack. Abul Aur securely posted, with his rear open to the fertile vale of the Jordan from which the Greeks were now cut off, was content to wait till the summer heat should dry up the quagmire. Meanwhile the enemy, 80,000 strong, was held in check, if not virtually blockaded.

Attacked by main army, Summer 13 A.H. 634 A.D., The summer was well advanced when the Arabs broke up their camp at Damascus. They were eager to attack Heraclius at Hims (Emessa); but Omar forbade advance so long as an army was in the rear. Leaving, therefore, Yezid with a garrison of Yemen levies as Governor of Damascus, Abu Obeida hastened back with the rest of his army to Fihl. The province of the Jordan was in command of Shorahbîl; to him, therefore, Abu Obeida committed the conduct of the campaign within his jurisdiction. Khalid led the van, Abu Obeida himself commanded one of the wings, Amru the other, and the famous warrior Dhirâr (of whom romance tells so many marvellous feats) directed the cavalry. Retracing their steps, they crossed the Yermuk near the hot springs of Omm Keis (the ancient Gadara), and marching down the valley of the Jordan encamped under Fihl. Abul Aur, who had held the enemy so long in check, was now detached towards Tiberias, to prevent diversion from that

---

[1] 1 Samuel xxxi. 7, *et seq.* *Beth-Shan* by contraction *Beisan* (the ancient Scythopolis), once a noble city, the seat of a Bishop and site of Convents, the birthplace of Cyril and Basilides. Here Alexander had his interview with Cleopatra; and Pompey took it on his way from Damascus to Judæa. Pella has a special interest, as the refuge of the Christians when Titus attacked Judæa. Both Fihl and Beisan at the time of our history were populous and flourishing cities.

A.H. 13-14.

quarter. And the main army, taking his place before Beisan, continued patiently the blockade.

and routed. Battle of Fihl.

Reduced to straits, and mistaking inaction for remissness, the Byzantine army thought to fall upon the Arabs unawares. They little knew the vigilance of Shorahbîl who night and day was on the watch. Fetching a circuit, the enemy suddenly appeared on the Moslem flank. They met a warm reception, and there ensued a battle as fierce and obstinate as any that had yet taken place. All day the Greeks held their ground; but by nightfall the impetuosity of the Arabs had its way. The Byzantine captain fell, and his army broke and fled. The greater part were caught in the marsh, and few escaped the sword. "Thus the Lord wrought for His people," writes the pious annalist; "and the morass which we thought "a curse was turned into a blessing." The plain of Esdraelon had thus again looked down upon another great and sanguinary conflict which, following that of Wacûsa, decided for many a long century the fate of Syria. The Moslem loss was trifling; the immense booty served but to sharpen the Arab appetite for further victory.

Khalid's contingent returns to Irac.

No enemy was now left in sight. Omar, therefore, remembering the behest of Abu Bekr, gave orders that the contingent of Khalid should return to Irac. Its ranks, thinned by hard fighting, were made up to former strength by transfer of volunteers from the Syrian army. Thus recruited, the troops (under command, not now of Khalid, but of Hashim son of Otba) recrossed the desert just in time to take part in the great battle of Cadesiya. Abu Obeida, with Khalid, having now in view the advance on Hims, returned to Damascus. Shorahbîl and Amru were left to reduce to order the province of the Jordan, and their task was easy. The fire of patriotism had never burned brightly anywhere in Syria; and what there might have been was now extinguished by the listless cowardice of the Byzantine court. To the free Bedouin race, weary of Roman trammels, the prospect of Arabian rule was far from unwelcome. Neither were the Jews and Samaritans unfavourable to the invaders; indeed, we find them not

Province of Jordan reduced.

A.H. 13-14.

infrequently giving aid and information to the enemy. Even the Christians cared little for the maintenance of a Government which by courtly and ecclesiastical intolerance had done its best to alienate their affection.

Tiberias and district east of Jordan.

Beisan for some time held out; but the garrison, when their sallies had been repeatedly repulsed, at last capitulated. Tiberias followed, and both obtained the terms of Damascus. Jerash, Maab, Bostra, and other strongholds tendered submission. And so the whole tract from the Jordan eastward to the Desert was brought under control, and safely garrisoned.

Rest of Syria.

From Damascus Yezid extended his authority eastward as far as Tadmor. Toward the sea, his brother Muavia, meeting little opposition, reduced Sidon and Beyrut, and pushed his conquests to the north of Tripolis. Damascus itself, largely occupied by Arabs, quickly assumed the garb of a Moslem city. Christian power and influence lingered longer on the coast. Once and again, from seaward, Byzantine arms retook what the Arabs had gained. It was not, indeed, until the Moslem rulers had begun to cope with the naval forces of the Mediterranean, that their authority was riveted along the littoral, as it had long been in the interior.

Leaving Abu Obeida and Khalid to renew the campaign northward, we return for the present to stirring scenes on the plains of Chaldæa.

CHAPTER XIV

YEZDEGIRD SUCCEEDS TO THE THRONE OF PERSIA. BATTLE OF CADESIYA

14 A.H. 635 A.D.

Yezdegird king of Persia. End of 13 A.H. Dec. 634 A.D.

WE left Mothanna, after the great battle of Boweib, ravaging at will the terror-stricken coasts of Chaldæa. But another wave of war was about to sweep over the unhappy land. A new movement was taking place at Medain. The Persian nobles, chafing under the weakness of Rustem and the feeble Queen, began to cry out that these were dragging the Empire down to ruin. The ladies of the Court assembled to search whether any king might not yet be discovered of the royal blood. And so Yezdegird was found, saved as a child from the massacre of Siroes, now a youth of twenty-one. He was placed upon the throne. Around the young King the nobles rallied loyally, and something was rekindled of ancient patriotic fire. Troops were gathered, Mesopotamia reoccupied, and the cities as far as Hira strongly garrisoned.

Revived military movement.

Mothanna again falls back.

The people returned to their allegiance; and Mothanna, finding his diminished army unable to cope with the rising which in the Spring assumed such formidable dimensions, again withdrew behind the Euphrates. He sent an urgent message to Omar of the new perils threatening all around. The danger was met bravely by the Caliph. "I swear by "the Lord," was his emphatic word, "that I will smite "down the proud princes of Persia with the sword of the "princes of Arabia." It was clearly impossible permanently to hold Mesopotamia while it was dominated by the Capital of Persia so close at hand. Medain must be taken

A.H. 14.

Omar orders another levy.

at any cost, and a great army gathered for the purpose. Orders, more stringent than ever (as already told), went forth for a new and universal levy. "Haste hither," was the command sent everywhere, "hasten speedily!" And forthwith Arabia again resounded with the call to arms. The tribes from the south were to assemble before the Caliph at Medina; those lying northward,—the demand being urgent and time precious,—were to march straight to Mothanna. So much arranged, Omar set out on the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. This accomplished, he repaired to the camp outside Medina, where the Contingents as they came in were marshalled. There it was debated whether the Caliph, as he proposed, and as the people wished, should in person lead the army to Irac. The chief Companions were against it. Defeat, if Omar were on the field, might be fatal; seated at Medina, even at the worst, he could launch column after column on the enemy. Omar yielded; but the readiness he had thus shown to bear in his own person the heat and burden of the day, added new impulse to the movement.

Goes on pilgrimage, xii. 13 A.H. Feb. 635 A.D.

Sad appointed commander in Irac.

Who now should be the leader of this great army in Irac? Mothanna and Jarîr were but Bedouin chieftains. None but a Peer could take command of the proud tribes now flocking to the field. The matter was at the moment under discussion, when there came a despatch from Sad, the Caliph's lieutenant with the Hawazin, reporting the levy of a thousand good lances from amongst that tribe. "Here is the man!" cried out the assembly. "Who?" asked the Caliph. "None but the *Ravening Lion*,"[1] was the answer,—"Sad, the son of Malik." The choice was sealed by acclamation; and Omar at once summoned Sad. Converted at Mecca while yet a boy, the new Ameer of Irac was now forty years of age. He is known as "the "first who drew blood in Islam," and was a noted archer in the Prophet's wars.[2] He took rank also as the nephew of Mahomet's mother. Short and dark, with large head and shaggy hair, Sad was brave, but not well-favoured.

---

[1] A play upon the name *Sad*, or "lion."

[2] *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 57, 61.

A.H. 14

The Caliph gave him advice on the momentous issues of the campaign, and warned him not to trust in his extraction. "The Lord," he said, "looketh to merit and good "works, not to birth; for in His sight all men are equal." Admonished thus, Sad set out for Irac, with 4000 men the first-fruits of the new levy. According to Arab custom, these marched now with their wives and children.

Sad with the new levies marches to Irac.

As the levies kept coming in, Omar sent them on, one after another, to join Sad. The numbers swelling rapidly, embraced the chivalry of all Arabia. Toleiha, the *quondam* prophet, now an exemplary believer, and Amr ibn Madekerib, went in command of their respective tribes; and Omar wrote that each alone was worth a thousand men. Ashath, also, the apostate rebel of the south, now joined the army with a column of his tribe. In short, Omar "left not a single person of any note or dignity in the land, whether warrior, poet, orator, or chieftain, nor any man possessed of horse or weapons, but he sent him off to Irac." Thus reinforced, Sad found himself at the head of 20,000 men, so that, with the column now on its way from Syria, the numbers were over 30,000,—by far the largest force yet mustered by the Arabs on the Chaldæan plain. The new levies, with the veterans of Mothanna, drew together at Sheraf on the borders of the desert, fifteen or twenty miles south of Hira.

Death of Mothanna, ii. 14 A.H. April 635.

Before Sad reached the appointed rendezvous, Mothanna had passed away. His brother Moanna was just returning from a mission to the Beni Bekr, whom the Court of Persia were endeavouring to gain over. He went out to meet Sad with intelligence of his having frustrated the attempt, as well as with the sad news of his brother's death. He delivered also Mothanna's dying message to the new Commander, advising that the Arabs should hold to their ground on the confines of the desert. "Fight there the "enemy," was his last behest;—"Ye will be the victors; and, "even if worsted, ye will have the friendly desert wastes "behind: there the Persians cannot enter, and from thence "ye will again return to the attack." Sad, as he received the message, blessed the memory of the great General. He

A.H. 14. also made the bereaved family his special care; and, the more effectually to discharge the trust, in true Arab fashion, took to wife his widow Selma.

Sad marshals his troops.

The army was marshalled by Sad anew. Companies were formed of ten, each under a selected leader. Warriors of note were appointed to bear the standards. Columns and squadrons were made up by clans and tribes; and thus by clans and tribes they marched, and also went into the field of battle. Departments likewise were established for the several duties incident to military service. The chief commands were given to Veterans who had fought under the Prophet's banner; for in this army there were no fewer than 1400 Companions, of whom ninety-nine had fought at Bedr. Following Mothanna's counsel, now confirmed by Omar, Sad marched slowly to Odzeib, still keeping to the border of the Desert. There he left the women and children protected by a party of horse, and advanced to Cadesiya, a great plain washed on its farther side by the inland channel of the Euphrates already described, and bounded on the west by the Trench of Sapor (in those days a running stream) with the desert waste beyond. The plain was traversed by the highway from Arabia, which here crossed the river on a bridge of boats leading to Hira, and thence across the Peninsula to Medain. Such was the field of battle which was shortly to settle the fate of Persia. Sad, keeping still to the western bank, fixed his headquarters at Codeis, a small fortress overlooking the stream and a little way below the bridge. Here he encamped and waited patiently the movements of his enemy.

and encamps at Cadesiya, Summer 14 A.H.

The King, impatient, orders advance.

Rustem would have played the same waiting game as Sad, had not the King become impatient. The Arabs were making continual raids across the river into Mesopotamia. The castles of the nobles were attacked, and their grounds laid waste. A marriage procession was captured near to Hira, and the bride, a Satrap's daughter, carried off with her maids and trousseau into the Moslem camp. The spring passed away, and the summer came; but with it no relief. Herds were driven from the pasture-lands, and frequent forays served at once to furnish the Moslem army with food and punish their faithless allies. The people grew clamorous; and the great landlords at last made it known that if help were delayed, they must go over to the enemy. Moved by their cries, Yezdegird turned a deaf ear to Rustem, and insisted on immediate advance.

Sad gives Omar description of field.

Meanwhile, Sad kept up constant communication with Omar. When asked for a description of the camp,—"Cadesiya," he told the Caliph, "lies between the "Trench of Sapor and the river; in front is the deep "stream, which on the left meanders through a verdant "vale downwards from the town of Hira; a canal leads in "like direction to the lake of Najaf, and upon its margin "stands the palace of Khawarnac. Our right is guarded "by an impassable swamp, and our rear rests on the "desert." Omar, satisfied with the report, enjoined vigilance and patience. But first, he said, Yezdegird must be summoned to embrace the Faith at the peril of his kingdom. With this commission, twenty warriors of commanding mien crossed the plain and presented themselves at the gates of Medain. As they were led to the Royal presence, the rabble crowded round, and jeered at the rough habit of the Arabs, clad in striped stuff, and armed with rude weapons of the desert,—contrasting strangely with the courtly splendour of the Regal city. "Look!" they cried, mocking, "look at the woman's distaff,"—a Bedouin bow slung over the shoulder,—little thinking of the havoc it was soon to make amongst their crowded ranks. As the Chiefs entered the precincts, the prancing and champing of the beautiful steeds, and the wild bearing of the stalwart riders, struck awe into the heart of the King and his effeminate Nobles. Yezdegird demanded through an interpreter, wherefore, thus unprovoked, they dared invade his kingdom. One after another the Arabian spokesmen told him of the Prophet who had wrought a mighty change in their land, and of the blessings and obligations of Islam. "Embrace "the Faith," they said, "and thou shalt be even as we; "or, if thou wilt, pay tribute, and come under our pro-

Deputation summons Yezdegird to embrace Islam.

A.H. 11.

"tection; which things if thou refuse, the days of thy "kingdom are numbered." The King replied contemptuously: "Ye are naught, ye are naught! hungry adven-"turers from a naked land; come, I will give you a "morsel, and ye shall depart full and content." The Arabs replied in strong but modest words. "Thou "speakest truth; we are but poor and hungry; yet will "the Lord enrich and satisfy us; hast thou chosen the "sword? then between us shall the sword decide." The King's wrath was kindled. "If it were not that ye are "Ambassadors, ye should have been put to death, all of "you. Bring hither a clod of earth, and let the mightiest "among them bear it as a burden from out the city "gates." The Arabs embraced the happy augury. A stalwart horseman forthwith seized the load, mounted his charger, and bearing it, rode away. Rustem coming up just then, the King told him of the affront he had put upon the simple Arabs. "Simple!" cried Rustem, "it is thou that art simple"; and he sent in haste to get the burden back. But the horseman was already out of sight; hurrying back to Cadesiya, he cast the clod before his Chief, and exclaimed, "Rejoice, O Sad! for, lo, the Lord hath given thee of the soil of Persia!"

Rustem with great army advances slowly,

Rustem could no longer delay. Elephants and men had been gathered from every quarter to swell the host, now 120,000 strong. Yet, notwithstanding, he marched slowly and unwillingly. The auguries, we are told, boded some great disaster. But he cherished the hope that the Arabs, pinched in their supplies, would break up suddenly and disappear; or that, wearied with suspense, they might be drawn from their strong position across the river. After great delay upon the road, he crossed the Euphrates below Babylon. Advancing then on Hira, he chided the people for siding with the Arabs; but they replied that, deserted by the King, they had no resource but to bow before the invaders. At last, having whiled away many weeks, he came within sight of the Moslem force and pitched his camp on the opposite bank of the river.

And encamps opposite Arabs, ix. 14 A.H. Oct. 635 A.D.

During this long period of inaction, the impatience of

A.H. 14.

Sad restrains his army.

the Arabs was checked by the strong hand of Sad, to whom as lieutenant of the Caliph they were bound to yield implicit obedience. Excepting raids and reconnoitring expeditions nothing was attempted. Some of these, however, were sufficiently exciting. Toleiha, the *quondam* prophet, entered alone the enemy's camp by night, and carried off three horses. Hotly chased, he slew his pursuers one after another, and single-handed carried off the last, who embraced Islam and thereafter fought faithfully by his captor's side. As the Enemy drew near, the Moslem host lay couched like the tiger in its lair, ready for the fatal spring.

Rustem gets three days' truce.

The armies at last now face to face, Rustem had no more excuse for putting off the decisive day. On the morning after his arrival he rode along the river bank to reconnoitre; and, standing on an eminence by the bridge, sent for the Moslem officer guarding the passage. A colloquy ensued; and Sad consented that three of his captains should go to the Persian camp, and there explain their demands to Rustem. One after another, these presented themselves. Each held the same language: *Islam*, *Tribute*, or the *Sword*. Rustem, now contemptuous in his abuse, now cowering under the fierce words of the envoys, and scared by dreams and auguries, demanded time to consider. Three days' grace, they replied, was the limit allowed by their Prophet; and that was given.

Throws dam across river,

When the term was over, Rustem sent to inquire whether he or they should cross for battle. Strongly pitched, as we have seen, Sad had no thought of moving, and bade the Persian cross as best he might. Rustem advanced, but passage was denied. All night the Arabs watched the bridge. But Rustem had another scheme; he meant to cross the river by a dam. During the night his myrmidons cast fascines and earth into the channel, and morning light discovered a causeway over which it was possible to pass.

And crosses to field of battle.

At early morn, Rustem, clad in helmet and double suit of mail, leaped gaily on his horse. "By the morrow we "shall have beaten them small," he cried; but apart with

A.H. 14.

his familiars he confessed that celestial omens were against him. And, indeed, previous mishaps and the brave bearing of the Arab chiefs were sufficient, astrology apart, to inspire grave forebodings. Crossing the dam unopposed, he marshalled his great host on the western bank, with its centre facing the fortress of Codeis. Of thirty war elephants on the field, eighteen supported the centre, the remainder being divided between the wings.[1] On a canopied golden throne by the riverside, Rustem watched the issue of the day. Messengers, posted within earshot of each other all the way to Medain, shouted continually the latest news, and kept Yezdegird informed of everything that passed.

Sad, disabled by illness, marshals army from ramparts of Codeis.

As the Persians began to cross, the advanced guard of the Arabs fell back upon Codeis, beneath which the main body was drawn up. On its ramparts, Sad, disabled by blains and boils, lay stretched upon a litter; from whence casting down his orders inscribed on scraps of paper, he guided thus the movements of the day. The troops, unused to see their leader in a place of safety, murmured; and verses lampooning him passed round the camp. That he, the archer of renown, the "first to shed blood in Islam," should be thus aspersed was insupportable, and Sad had the ringleaders imprisoned in the fortress. He then descended, and discovered to the troops the grievous malady which rendered it impossible for him even to sit upright, much less to mount his horse. They accepted his excuse; for no man could doubt his bravery; but still a certain feeling of discontent survived. Resuming his couch, he harangued the army from the battlements, and then sent his Generals, with the Orators and Poets of the force, along the ranks with stirring words to rouse their martial zeal.

Warlike texts recited before the Moslem host.

At the head of every column was recited the revelation of the thousand angels fighting on the Prophet's side, together with such texts as these:—*Stir up the Faithful unto*

---

[1] These were distinct from the riding elephants of the Court and nobles, and must all have been imported from India. The elephant was not used by the Assyrians in war. It rarely appears in their mural representations, and only under peaceful associations.

A.H. 14.

battle. If there be twenty steadfast among you, they shall put to flight two hundred, and a hundred shall put to flight a thousand. The Lord will cast terror into the hearts of the Infidels. Beware that ye turn not your back in battle; verily he that turneth his back shall draw down upon him the wrath of God. His abode shall be Hell-fire. The mention of "The day of Decision" at Bedr, with the Divine command to fight, never failed to fire the souls of the Moslem host; and here we are told, that upon its recital "the heart of the people was refreshed, and their "eyes lightened, and they realised the Divine peace[1] that "followeth thereupon."

Battle of Cadesiya, ix. 14 A.H. Nov. 635.

First day; called *Armath*.

The word passed round that, till midday prayer, no one should stir. The Commander-in-chief would give the first signal by the Takbir, or war-cry, ALLAH AKBAR, *Great is the Lord!* and the host would then take up the shout three successive times from him. At the second and third shout, they were to gird their weapons on and make their horses ready. At the fourth, the ranks were to rush in one body forward with the watchword, *Our help is from the Lord!* The order was deranged by the enemy, who, hearing the first shout, advanced at once; whereupon impatient warriors from the Moslem front stepped out and, challenging to single combat, did prodigies of valour. The heroic feats of Bedr were re-enacted on this field, and the spoil, stripped from the fallen champions, was beyond description rich. Thus Amr ibn Madekerib carried off triumphantly the bracelets and jewelled girdle of a princely victim. Another, shouting gaily the praises of his mistress,[2] closed with Hormuz, "a prince of the Gate," and bore him with his diadem captive to Sad. A leader of the Beni Temîm, singing like verses, pursued his adversary through the enemy's ranks; there he seized a mule-driver, and carried him with his laden beast to the

---

[1] Same word as *Shechina*, divine influence overshadowing the heart: Suras viii. and xlviii. The practice of reciting such Suras or portions of them before battle, has been handed down to the present day.

[2] His song, of the ordinary type, ran thus:—

"The maid, with hanging tresses, milk-white breast and fingers tapering,
Knoweth full well the hero who will lay the warriors low."

A.H. 14.

Abu Mihjan.

Moslem lines; it was the King's baker with a load of royal viands. More remarkable still is the story of Abu Mihjan. A ringleader in the detraction of Sad, his offence was aggravated by drunkenness. Bound a prisoner in the fortress, under charge of Selma the General's wife, he was seized by an irrepressible ardour to join the battle. At his earnest entreaty, and under pledge of early return, the lady set him free, and mounted him on her husband's white mare. An unknown figure, he dashed now into the enemy's host, and now in circuits round it, performing marvels of bravery. Some thought it might be the chief of the Syrian contingent expected that day. Others opined that it was Al Khizr, precursor of the angelic band. But Sad himself said, "If it were not that Abu "Mihjan is safe in durance under Selma's care, I could "swear it were he, and the mare my own." According to promise, the hero, satisfied with his exploits, returned to Selma, who reimposed his fetters as before, and shortly after secured his release.[1] Now the elephants bore down upon the Bedouin lines. The brunt of the onset fell upon the Beni Bajila. The huge beasts swaying to and fro,—"their *howdas*, manned with warriors and banners, like "moving castles,"—affrighted the Arab horses, which broke away at the horrid sight. The Beni Asad diverted the attack upon themselves, and in the heroic act left four hundred dead upon the field. Then the elephants attacked the wings, spreading consternation all around; and the enemy, profiting by the confusion, pressed forward. The position was critical; and Sad, as a last resource, bade Asim rid them from the danger at whatever cost. At once that gallant chief chose a band of archers and of

The elephants.

---

[1] He confessed to Selma that in his cups he had been singing these verses:—

"Bury me when I die by the roots of the vine;
The moisture thereof will distil into my bones;
Bury me not in the open plain, for then I much fear
That no more shall I taste again the sweet grape."

But he pledged his word to her that he would not again indulge in drinking, nor abuse the Ameer. Selma then obtained his release, and he joined his comrades on the last great day.

agile skirmishers, who, drawing near, picked their riders from off the elephants, and boldly cut the girths. The howdas fell, and the great beasts, with none to guide them, fled. Thus relieved, the Arabs regained their ground. But the shades of darkness were falling, and both armies retired for the night.

Sad upbraided by his wife.

The Moslem force was downcast. The uncertain issue added point to the invectives against Sad, and, what was still harder for him to bear, the taunts of Selma. During the day, as seated by her lord, they watched together from the ramparts the deadly conflict, she exclaimed, "O for "an hour of Mothanna! Alas, alas, there is no Mothanna "this day!" Stung by the words, Sad struck her on the face, and pointing to Asim and his band, said, "What of "Mothanna? Was he anything at all compared with "these?" "Jealousy and cowardice!" cried the high-spirited dame, faithful to her first husband's memory. "Not so," said Sad, somewhat softened; "I swear that "no man will this day excuse me if thou dost not, who "seest in what plight I lie." The people sided with the lady; but Sad was no coward, and he lived the contumely down.

Second day; called *Aghwath.*

Return of first Syrian brigade.

The morning was occupied with the wounded and the dead; and the day drew on before fighting recommenced. Just then the first column of the Contingent sent back from Syria came in view. It was led by Cacaa, who, leaving Hashim to bring up the main body of five thousand on the following day, hurried forward with a thousand men. By skilful disposition Cacaa magnified his force, in the eyes of both friend and foe. He arranged his men in squadrons of a hundred, each a little distance behind the other. Advancing, he saluted Sad and his comrades, and bade them joy of the coming help. Then calling on the rest to follow, he at once rode forth to defy the enemy. The "hero of the Bridge"[1] accepted the challenge. Cacaa recognised his Royal foe; and crying out, "Now will I "avenge Abu Obeid and those that perished at the "Bridge," rushed on his man and cut him to the ground.

---

[1] Bahman; see p. 92.

A.H. 14. As each squadron came up, it charged with all the appearance of a fresh and independent force across the plain in sight of both armies, and shouted the Takbir, which was answered by the same ringing cheer, *Allah Akbar*, from the Moslem line. The spirits of the Arabs rose. They forgot the disasters of yesterday; and by so much the heart of the Persians sank, who saw their heroes slain, one after another, at the hands of Cacaa and his fellows. They had no elephants this day, for the gear was not yet repaired. Pressed on all sides, their horse gave way, and Rustem was only saved by a desperate rally. But the Persian infantry stood their ground, and the day closed, the issue still trembling in the balance. The fighting was severe and the carnage great. Two thousand Moslems lay dead or wounded on the field, and ten thousand Persians. All night through the Arabs kept shouting the names and lineage of their several tribes. There was shouting, too, in the Persian camp. And so, encouraging themselves, each side awaited the final struggle.

Third day; called *Ghimas.*

On the third morning, the army was engaged in the mournful task of removing their fallen comrades from the field. The space of a mile between the two lines was strewn with them. The wounded were made over to the women to nurse, if perchance they might survive, or rather,—in the language of Islam—"until the Lord should "decide whether to grant, or to withhold, the crown of "Martyrdom." The dead were borne to Odzeib, a valley in the rear, where the women and children hastily dug graves for them in the sandy soil. The wounded, too, were carried thither. For the suffering sick it was a weary way under the burning sun. A solitary palm-tree stood on the road, and under its welcome shade they were for a moment laid. Its memory is consecrated in such plaintive verse as this:—

> "Hail to the grateful palm that waves between Cadesiya and Odzeib.
> Around thee grow the wild sprigs of camomile and hyssop.
> May dew and shower refresh thy leaves for evermore,
> And let never a palm-tree be wanting in thy dry and heated waste!"

A day and night of unceasing conflict was still before

A.H. 14.

Fighting resumed: Syrian contingent comes up.

the combatants. The spirit of the Persians, whose dead lay unburied on the field, flagged at the disasters of the preceding day, but much was looked for from the elephants, which, now refitted, appeared upon the field, each protected by a company of horse and foot. The battle was about to open, when suddenly Hashim came in sight with the main body of his Syrian contingent. Sweeping across the plain, he charged right into the enemy, pierced their ranks, and reaching the river bank, turned and rode triumphantly back, amidst shouts of welcome. The fighting was again severe, and the day balanced by alternate victory and repulse. Yezdegird, alive to the crisis, sent his bodyguard into the field. The elephants were the terror of the Arabs, and again threatened to paralyse their efforts. In this emergency, Sad had recourse to Cacaa, who was achieving marvels, and had already slain thirty Persians in single combat; so that the annalists gratefully acknowledge that "had it not been for what the Lord put "it into the heart of Cacaa to do, we surely had been that "day worsted." Sad now learned that the eye and trunk were the only vulnerable parts of the elephant: "Aim at "these," he said, "and we shall be rid of this calamity." So Cacaa with his brother Asim and a band of followers issued on the perilous enterprise. There were two huge elephants, the leaders of the herd. Dismounting, Cacaa boldly advanced, and into the eye of one, the "great White elephant" it was called, he thrust his lance. Smarting at the pain, it shook fearfully its head, threw the Mahout to the ground, and swaying its trunk to and fro, hurled Cacaa to a distance. The other fared still worse, for they pierced both its eyes, and slashed its trunk. Uttering a shrill scream of agony, the blinded, maddened creature darted forward on the Arab ranks. Shouts and lances drove it back upon the Persians. Thus kept rushing wildly to and fro between the armies, and followed at last by the other elephants, it charged right into the Persian line; and so the whole herd of huge animals,—their trunks aloft, trumpeting as they rushed, and trampling all before them,—plunged into the river

The elephants put to flight.

A.H. 14.

and disappeared on the farther shore. For the moment the din of war was hushed as both lines gazed at the portentous sight. But soon the battle was resumed, and they fought on till darkness again closed on the combatants with the issue still in doubt.

The Night of Clangour: fight till morning.

The third night brought rest to neither side. It was a struggle for life. At first there was a pause, as the light faded away; and Sad, fearing lest the vast host should overlap his rear, sent parties to watch the fords. There had as yet been hardly time for even momentary repose when, early in the night, it occurred to some of the Arab leaders to rally their tribes with the view of harassing the enemy. The movement, made at the first without Sad's cognisance, drew on a general engagement in the dark. The screams of the combatants and din of arms made *The Night of Clangour*,[1] as it is called, without parallel in the annals of Islam. It could only be compared to "the clang of the blacksmith's forge." Sad betook himself to prayer, for no sure tidings reached him all night through. Morning broke on the two hosts, worn and weary. Then arose Cacaa, crying out that one more vigorous charge must turn the tide, "for victory is ever his that persevereth to the end." Four-and-twenty hours long the Arabs had fought unceasingly. And now they issued forth with all the freshness and alacrity of a new attack. The Persian wings began to waver. A fierce onslaught shook their centre, which opened and laid bare the bank with Rustem on his throne. Tempestuous wind arose, and the canopy, no longer guarded, was blown into the river. The wretched Prince had barely time to fly and crouch beneath a sumpter mule, when the chance blow of a passer-by brought down its load upon his back. He crawled into the river and attempted there to hide himself. But a soldier saw and recognised his royal foe,

Persians routed and Rustem slain.

---

[1] *Harîr*. Each day had its name, as given in margin. The first and third have no apparent meaning, perhaps names of places. The second may refer to the "succour" brought by the Syrian contingent. See C. de Perceval, vol. iii. p. 481. Gibbon (chap. li.) ignores the first day, and names the other three, as *Succour*, *Concussion*, and *Barking*.

and drawing him out, slew him on the spot; then mounting on his throne, he loudly proclaimed the conquered Prince's end.

Destruction of Persian host.

No sooner was their leader slain, than rout and slaughter of the Persian host began. Some of the columns succeeded in passing the dam; but it was soon cut (probably by themselves to prevent pursuit), and swept away with a multitude upon it, by the pent-up stream. To the right and left, up the river bank and down, the Mussulmans chased the fugitives relentlessly. The plain, far and wide, was strewn with dead. The fugitive multitude, hunted into the fens and marshes, were everywhere put mercilessly to the sword. But the army was too exhausted to carry on the pursuit.

Moslem loss.

The Mussulman loss far exceeded that of any previous engagement. In the final conflict 6000 fell, besides 2500 in the days before. No sooner was the battle ended, than the women and children, with clubs and pitchers of water, issued forth on a double mission of mercy and of vengeance. Every fallen Mussulman, still warm and breathing, they gently raised and wetted his lips with water. But towards the wounded Persians they knew no mercy; for them they had another errand—to raise their clubs and give the *coup de grâce.* Thus had Islam for the moment extinguished pity, and implanted in the breasts of women, and even of little children, cold-blooded cruelty.

Vastness of booty.

The spoil was great beyond all parallel, both in amount and costliness. Each soldier had six thousand pieces, besides the special gifts for veterans and such as showed extraordinary valour. The jewels stripped from Rustem's body were worth 70,000 pieces, although its most costly portion, the Tiara, had been swept away. The great banner of the Empire was captured on the field, made of panthers' skins, and so richly garnished with gems as to be valued at 100,000 pieces. Thus did the needy Arabs revel in the treasures of the East, the preciousness of which exceeded almost their power to comprehend.

For the enemy the defeat was fateful and decisive. Little more than thirty months had passed since Khalid

A.H. 14.

Importance of victory.

set foot in Irac; and already that Empire,—which fifteen years before had humbled the Byzantine arms, ravaged Syria, and encamped triumphantly on the Bosphorus,—was crumbling under the blows of an enemy whose strength never exceeded thirty or forty thousand Arabs rudely armed. The battle of Cadesiya reveals the secret. On one side there was lukewarm, servile following; on the other, an indomitable spirit, which after long and weary hours of fighting nerved the Moslems for the final charge. The vast host, on which the last efforts of Persia had been lavished, was totally discomfited; and, though broken columns escaped across the river, the military power of Persia never again gathered into formidable and dangerous shape. The country far and wide was terror-struck. The Bedouins on either side of the Euphrates hesitated no longer. Many of them, though Christian, had fought in the Moslem ranks. These came to Sad and said: "The tribes which at the first embraced "Islam were wiser than we. Now that Rustem hath been "slain, we will accept the new belief." And so, many of them came over and made profession of the Faith.

Tidings, how received by Omar.

The battle had been so long impending, and the preparations on so grand a scale, that the issue was watched everywhere, "from Odzeib away south to Aden, "and from Obolla across to Jerusalem," as about to decide the fate of Islam. The Caliph used to issue forth alone from the gates of Medina early in the morning, if perchance he might meet some messenger from the field. At last a camel-rider arrived outside the city, who to Omar's question replied shortly, "The Lord hath discom-"fited the Persian host." Unrecognised, Omar followed him on foot, and gleaned the outline of the great battle. Entering Medina, the people crowded round the Caliph, and, saluting, wished him joy of the triumph. The courier, abashed, cried out, "O Commander of the Faithful, why "didst thou not tell me?" "It is well, my brother," was the Caliph's simple answer. Such was the unpretending mien of one who at that moment was greater than either the Kaiser or the Chosroes.

CHAPTER XV

EVENTS FOLLOWING THE BATTLE OF CADESIYA. CAPTURE OF MEDAIN

A.H. 15–16. A.D. 636–637

Sad reoccupies Hira, end of 14 A.H. Jan. 636 A.D.

By desire of the Caliph, Sad paused for a while to let the weary troops refit. Fragments of the defeated host escaped in the direction of Babylon, and rallied there. After two months' rest, Sad, now recovered from sickness, advanced to attack them. On the march he re-entered Hira. It was the third time the unfortunate City had been taken. Punishment for the last helpless defection, was now the doubling of its tribute. Soon supplanted by Kufa, a few miles distant, the once Royal city of Hira speedily dwindled into insignificance. But the neighbouring palace of Khawarnac, beautiful residence of a bygone Dynasty, was still left standing by the Lake of Najaf, and was sometimes visited as a country-seat by the Caliphs and their Court in after days.

Plain of Dura cleared.

The scattered Persian troops rallied first at the Tower of Babel, and then, recrossing the Euphrates, halted under the great mound of Babylon. Driven from thence, they fell back upon the Tigris. Sad pitched a standing camp at Babylon, from whence he cleared the plain of Dura, fifty miles broad, from the Euphrates to the Tigris. The territorial chiefs from all sides now came in, some as converts, some as tributaries; and throughout the tract between the two rivers, Moslem rule again became supreme. Several months passed; and at last, in the summer, Sad found himself able, with the full consent of Omar,

A.H. 15-16.

now in the second year of his reign, to advance upon Medain.

Medain, capital of Persia.

The royal City was built on both banks of the Tigris, at a sharp double bend of the river, fifteen miles below the modern Baghdad. Seleucia, on the right bank, was the seat of the Alexandrian conquerors. On the opposite shore had grown up Ctesiphon, residence of the Persian monarchs. The combined City had for ages superseded Babylon as the capital of Chaldæa. Repeatedly taken by the Romans, it was now great and prosperous, but helplessly torn by intrigue and enervated by luxury. The main City, with its Royal palaces, was on the eastern side, where the noble arch, the *Tâk i Kesra*, still arrests the traveller's eye as he sails down the Tigris. Sad now directed his march to the Quarter which lay upon the nearer side. On the way he was attacked by the Queen-mother. Animated by the ancient spirit of her race, and with a great oath that so long as the Dynasty survived the empire was invincible, she took the field with an army commanded by a veteran General, "the lion of Chosroes." She was utterly discomfited, and her champion slain by the hand of Hashim.

Queen-mother discomfited.

Sad then marched forward; and, drawing a lesson from the vainglorious boast of the vanquished Princess, publicly recited before the assembled troops this passage from the sacred text:—

> "Did ye not swear aforetime that ye would never pass away? Yet ye inhabited the dwellings of a people that had dealt unjustly by their own souls; and ye saw how We dealt with them. We made them a warning and example unto you."—(*Sura* xiv. *v.* 44.)

Siege laid to western quarter. Summer 15 A.H. 636 A.D.

In this spirit they came upon the river; and lo! the famous Iwân, with its great hall of white marble, stood close before them on the farther shore. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Sad, dazzled at the sight; "*Allah Akbar!* What "is this but the White pavilion of Chosroes! Now hath "the Lord fulfilled the promise which He made unto His "Prophet." And each company shouted *Allah Akbar! Great is the Lord!* as it came up and gazed at the Palace, almost within their grasp. But the City was too strong

A.H. 15–16.

to storm, and Sad sat down before it. Warlike engines were brought up, but they made no impression on ramparts of sunburnt brick. The besieged issued forth in frequent sallies; it was the last occasion on which the warriors of Persia adventured themselves in single combat with the Arabs. The investment was strict, and the inhabitants reduced to great straits. The army lay for several months before the City; but Sad was not inactive in other directions. Bands were despatched wherever the great landholders failed to tender their submission. These ravaged Mesopotamia, and brought in multitudes as prisoners; but, by Omar's command, they were dismissed to their homes. Thus the country from Tekrit downwards, and from the Tigris to the Syrian desert, was brought entirely and conclusively under Moslem sway.

Western quarter evacuated, end of 15 A.H. Jan. 637 A.D.

The siege at last pressed so heavily on the western quarter, that the King sent a messenger with terms. He would give up all dominion west of the Tigris if they would leave him undisturbed on the eastern side. The offer was indignantly refused. Not long after, observing the walls no longer manned, an advance was ordered. They entered unopposed; the Persians had crossed, and carrying the ferryboats with them, entirely evacuated the City on the western bank. Not a soul was to be seen. But the farther Capital with the river between, was still defiant and secure. So the army for some weeks rested, and, occupying the deserted mansions of the western Quarter, enjoyed a foretaste of Persian luxury.

Capture of Medain, ii. 16 A.H. March 637 A.D.

On Medain being threatened, Yezdegird had despatched his family, with the regalia and treasure, to Holwan in the hilly country to the north: and now he contemplated flight himself in the same direction. The heart of Persia had sunk hopelessly; for otherwise the deep and rapid Tigris still formed ample defence against sudden assault. Indeed, the Arabs thought so themselves; for they were occupied many weeks in search of boats, which had all been removed from the western bank. Unexpectedly, a deserter apprised Sad of a place where the river could be

A.H. 15-16.

swum or forded. But the stream, always swift, was then upon the rise, and they feared lest the horses should be carried down by the turbid flood. Just then, tidings coming of the intended flight of Yezdegird, Sad at once resolved upon the enterprise. Gathering his force, he said to them:—"We are now at the mercy of the enemy, who, "with the river at command, is able to attack us unawares. "Now, the Lord hath shown unto one amongst us a vision "of the faithful upon horses, crossing the stream triumphantly. Arise, let us stem the flood!" The desperate venture was voted by acclamation. Six hundred picked cavalry were drawn up in bands of sixty. The foremost plunged in, and bravely battled with the rapid flood. Down and across they had already neared the other shore, when a hostile picket dashed into the water, and vainly endeavoured to beat them back. "Raise your lances," shouted Asim; "bear right into their eyes." So they drove them back, and safely reached dry land. Sad no sooner saw them safe on shore, than he called on the rest to follow; and thus, with the cry—"Allah! triumph "to thy people; Destruction to thine enemies!"—troop after troop leaped into the river, so thick and close, that the water was hidden from their view; and, treading as it had been solid ground, without a single loss, all gained the farther side. The Persians, taken by surprise, fled panic-stricken. The rapid passage afforded them time barely to escape. The few remaining, submitted themselves as tributaries. The Moslems pursued the fugitives; but soon hastened back to share the royal spoil. They wandered over the gorgeous pavilions of a Court into which the East had been long pouring forth its treasures, and revelled in gardens decked with flowers and laden with fruit. The Conqueror established himself in the Palace of the Chosroes. But first he was minded to render thanks in a Service of praise. The princely building was turned for this end into a House of prayer; and there, followed by as many as could be spared, Sad ascribed the victory to the Lord of hosts. The lesson was a passage of the Coran which speaks of Pharaoh overwhelmed in

Service of Victory.

the Red Sea; and also this verse, thought peculiarly appropriate:—

> "How many Gardens and Fountains did they leave behind,
> And Fields of corn, and Dwelling-places fair,
> And Pleasant things which they enjoyed!
> Even thus We made another people to inherit all."
> (*Sura* xliv. *v*. 25.)

Spoil of Medain.

The booty was rich beyond conception. Besides millions of treasure, there was countless store of silver and golden vessels, gorgeous vestments and garniture,—precious things of untold rarity and cost. The lucky capture of a train of mules disclosed an unexpected prize consisting of the tiara, robes, and girdle of the King. The Arabs gazed in wonder at the crown, jewelled swords, and splendour of the throne; and, among other marvels, at a camel of silver, large as life, with rider of gold; and a golden horse, with emeralds for teeth, its neck set with rubies, and its trappings of gold. The precious metals lost their value, for gold was plentiful as silver. Rich works of art in sandal-wood and amber were in the hands of everyone, hoards of musk and spicy products of the East. Camphor lay about in sacks, and was at first by mistake kneaded with the cakes as salt. The prize agents had a heavy task, for each man's share (and the army now numbered 60,000) was twelve thousand pieces,[1] besides special largesses for the more distinguished. The army forwarded to Medina, beyond the royal Fifth, such rare and precious things as might stir the wonder of the simple Citizens at home. To the Caliph they sent, as fitting gift, the regalia of the Empire, and the sword of the Chosroes.[2] But the spectacle of the day was the Royal banqueting carpet, seventy cubits long and sixty broad. It represented a garden, the ground wrought in gold, and the walks in silver; meadows

---

[1] Say £400 or £500 sterling for each soldier; from which (adding also the Fifth) the entire value of the booty may be gathered. The treasure alone is put at 1500 million pieces, a like sum having been taken away by Rustem for the Cadesiya campaign.

[2] Four other swords were taken: that of the Kaiser kept by Sad, and of Bahram by Cacaa; a third, of the Khâcân of the Turks; and a fourth, of the "King of Hind."

A.H. 15-16. of emeralds, and rivulets of pearls; trees, flowers, and fruits of sparkling diamonds, rubies, and other precious stones. When the rest of the spoil had been disposed of, Omar took counsel what should be done with the carpet. The most advised to keep it as a trophy of Islam. But Aly, reflecting on the instability of earthly things, objected; and the Caliph, accepting his advice, had it cut in pieces and distributed with the other booty. The part which fell to Aly's lot fetched twenty thousand dirhems.

Medain offering every convenience for the seat of government, Sad now established himself there. The Palaces and Mansions of the fugitive nobles were divided amongst his followers. The Royal residence he occupied himself. The grand Hall, its garnishing unchanged, was consecrated as a place of Prayer, and here the Friday, or Cathedral, service of Islam was first celebrated in the land of Persia.

CHAPTER XVI

BATTLE OF JALOLA. REDUCTION OF MESOPOTAMIA. KUFA AND BUSSORAH FOUNDED

16 A.H. 637 A.D.

Persian advance.

OMAR was satisfied, as well he might be, with the success achieved. His old spirit of caution revived, and beyond the plain skirted by the hilly range to the east, he strictly forbade a forward movement. Summer of the 16th year of the Hegira was passed in repose at Medain. The King, with his broken troops, had fled into the Persian mountains; and the people on either bank of the Tigris, seeing opposition vain, readily submitted to the conqueror.

Battle of Jalola.

In the autumn, the Persians, resolving again to try the chance of arms, flocked in great numbers to Yezdegird at Holwan, about one hundred miles north of Medain. From thence part of the force advanced to Jalola, a fortress held to be impregnable, surrounded by a deep trench, and the outlets guarded by *chevaux de frise* and spikes of iron. With Omar's sanction, Sad pushed forward Hashim and Cacaa at the head of 12,000 men, including the flower of Mecca and Medina; and they sat down in front of the Citadel. The garrison, reinforced from time to time by the army at Holwan, attacked the besiegers with desperate bravery. Fresh troops were despatched from Medain, and the siege was prolonged for eighty days. At length, during a vigorous sally, a storm darkened the air; and the Persian columns, losing their way, were pursued to the battlements by Cacaa, who seized one of the gates. Thus cut off, they turned in despair upon the Arabs, and a general engagement ensued, which was not

A.H. 16.

Persians routed and Jalola taken. End of 16 A.H. Dec. 637 A.D.

"surpassed by the *Night of Clangour*, excepting that it "was shorter." Beaten at every point, many Persians in the attempt to flee were caught by the iron spikes. They were pursued, and the country strewn with corpses. Followed by the fragments of his army, Yezdegird fled to Rei, in the direction of the Caspian Sea. Cacaa then advanced to Holwan, and defeating the enemy, left that stronghold garrisoned with Arab levies as the farthest Moslem outpost to the north.

The spoil.

The spoil again was rich and plentiful. Multitudes of captive women, many of gentle birth, were distributed, a much loved prize, part on the spot, and part sent to the troops at Medain. The booty was valued at thirty million dirhems, besides vast numbers of fine Persian horses, which formed a welcome acquisition to the army, nine falling to the lot of every combatant. In charge of the Fifth, Sad despatched to Medina a youth named Ziad, of doubtful parentage (of which more hereafter), but of singular readiness and address. In presence of the Caliph, he harangued the Citizens, and recounted in glowing words the prize of Persia, rich lands, endless spoil, slave-girls, and captive princesses. Omar praised his speech, and declared that the troops of Sad surpassed the traditions even of Arab bravery. But next morning, when distributing the rubies, emeralds, and vast store of precious things, he was seen to weep. "What!" exclaimed Abd al Rahman; "a time of "joy and thankfulness, and thou sheddest tears!" "Yea," replied the simple-minded Caliph; "it is not for this I "weep, but I foresee that the riches which the Lord "bestoweth on us will be a spring of worldliness and "envy, and in the end a calamity to my people."

Ziad sent with the Fifth to Omar.

Omar refuses an advance on Persia.

Ziad was also the bearer of a petition for leave to pursue the fugitives across the border into Khorasan. Omar, content with the present, forbade the enterprise. "I desire," he replied, "that between Mesopotamia and "countries beyond, the hills shall be a barrier, so that the "Persians shall not be able to get at us, nor we at them. "The plain of Irac sufficeth for our wants. I would rather "the safety of my people than thousands of spoil and

A.H. 16.

"further conquest." The thought of a world-wide mission was yet in embryo; obligation to enforce Islam by a universal Crusade had not yet dawned upon the Moslem mind; and, in good truth, an empire embracing Syria, Chaldæa, and Arabia might have satisfied the ambition even of an Assyrian or Babylonian monarch. The equal mind of Omar, far from being unsteadied by the flush and giddiness of victory, cared first to consolidate and secure the prize already in his hands.

Operations in Mesopotamia. Hit and Kirkesia taken. Summer, 16 A.H. 637 A.D.

Nothing now threatening on the Persian side, the ambition of Sad and his generals, checked by the Caliph's interdict, was for the present confined to the reduction of Mesopotamia. For this end, troops were sent up the Tigris as far as Tekrit,—a stronghold about a hundred miles above Medain, held by a mixed garrison of Greek troops and Christian Bedouins. These bravely resisted attack. After forty days the Greeks thought to desert their native allies and escape by boat. The Bedouins, on the other hand, gained secretly over by the Moslems, seized the Water-gate; and so the Greeks, taken on both sides, were put to the sword. The column, joined by the newly converted allies, pressed forward to Mosul, which surrendered and became tributary. On the Euphrates, the Moslem arms met with equal success. The Bedouin tribes in Mesopotamia urged by the Byzantine court to attack the invaders then threatening Hims, Sad was charged by Omar to draw them off by a diversion from his side. The fortress of Hit on the Euphrates was accordingly besieged; but it was too strong to carry by assault. Half of the force were left before the town, and the rest marched rapidly up the river to Kirkesia, at its junction with the Khabur, and took it by surprise. The garrison of Hit, when they heard of this, capitulated on condition of being allowed to retire. Thus, the lower half of Mesopotamia, from one river to the other, was reduced, the strongholds garrisoned, and the Bedouins either converted to the faith or brought under subjection.

From the junction of the two rivers also, downwards on either side of the Shat al Arab to the shores of the Persian

A.H. 16.

Persian Gulf; delta occupied; Otba governor of Obolla, 14 A.H. 635 A.D.

Gulf, the rule of Islam was now thoroughly established. This tract had been exposed, with various fortune, to Arab raids ever since the invasion of Mothanna. Omar saw that, to secure Irac, it was needful to occupy the head of the Gulf as far as the range of hills on its eastern side. About the period, therefore, of Sad's campaign, he deputed Otba, a Companion of note, with a party from Bahrein, to capture the flourishing seaport of Obolla. The garrison was defeated, and the inhabitants, chiefly Indian merchants, effected their escape by sea. The Persians rallied in force on the eastern bank of the river, and many encounters took place before the Arabs succeeded in securing their position. On one occasion, the women of the Moslem camp turning their veils into flags, and marching in martial array to the battlefield, were mistaken thus for fresh reinforcements, and contributed at a critical moment to victory. Otba remained at Obolla as governor; and, as we shall see, carried on successful operations during the next three years, against Khuzistan and the Persian border. Meanwhile Obolla gave place to the new capital of Bussorah.

Bussorah founded, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.,

On the ruins of Obolla when first captured, there had arisen a small town of huts constructed of reeds, with a Mosque of the same material. The settlement grew in size and importance by constant arrivals from Arabia. But the climate was inhospitable. The tide rises close to the level of the alluvial plain, which, irrigated thus with ease, stretches far and wide a sea of verdure. Groves of pomegranate, acacia, and shady trees abound; and a wide belt of the familiar date-palm fringing the river might reconcile the immigrant of the Hejaz to his new abode. But the moisture exhaled by so damp a soil was ill-suited to the Arabian humour; pestilential vapours followed the periodical inundations, and gnats everywhere settled in intolerable swarms.[1] Three times the site was changed; at last the pleasant spot of Bussorah, near the river, which supplied a stream of running

---

[1] The traveller of to-day still complains of the pest of musquitoes issuing from the groves of the Delta in gigantic swarms.

A.H. 16.

water, was fixed upon; and here a flourishing city rapidly grew up. It was laid out about the same time, and after the same fashion, as its rival Kufa. But, partly from a better climate, partly from a larger endowment of conquered lands, the northern city took the lead, as well in numbers as in influence and riches.

and Kufa,

The founding of Kufa was on this wise. The Arabs had been in occupation of Medain for some months, when a deputation visited Medina. The Caliph, startled by their sallow and unwholesome look, asked the cause. They replied that the city air did not suit the Arab temperament. Whereupon, he ordered inquiry for some more healthy and congenial spot; such as, approaching nearer the desert air, and well supplied with wholesome water, would not be cut off from ready help in any time of need. After diligent search along the desert outskirts, they found no place answering so well as the plain of Kufa, not far from Hira, on the banks of the western branch of the Euphrates. Omar confirmed the choice, and left it open for each man either to remain at Medain, or transfer his habitation thither. The new Capital suited the Arabs well, and to it accordingly they migrated in great numbers. The dwellings, as at Bussorah, were made at first of reeds. But fires were frequent; and after a disastrous conflagration, the Caliph gave permission that both cities might be built of brick. "The flitting camp," he wrote, "is the "warrior's proper place. But if ye must have a permanent "abode, be it so; only let no man have more houses than "three for his wives and children, nor exceed the modest "exemplar of the Prophet's dwelling-place." So the City was rebuilt, and the streets laid out in regular lines. The centre was kept an open square, in which was erected a Mosque with a portico for shade; and, for ornament, pillars of marble brought away from Hira. Sad built himself a spacious edifice, and reared in front of it a gateway, to prevent intrusion from the market-place hard by. The rumour of "the Castle of Sad" troubled the simple-minded Caliph, and he sent a Companion with a rescript commanding that the gateway should be pulled down. Arrived at

x. 18 A.H.
Oct. 638 A.D.

Omar bids Sad puil down the gateway of his palace.

A.H. 16.

Kufa, the envoy, invited by Sad to enter his mansion as a guest, declined. Sad came forth, and received this letter at his hands:—"It hath been reported to me that thou hast "builded for thyself a palace, and people call it *The Castle* "*of Sad*; moreover thou hast reared a gateway betwixt "thee and the people. It is not thy castle; rather is it "the castle of perdition. What is needful for the treasury, "that thou mayest guard and lock; but the gateway which "shutteth out the people from thee, that thou shalt break "down." Sad obeyed the order; but he protested that his object in building the portal had been falsely reported, and Omar accepted the excuse.

The Sawâd settled with the Fellaheen.

The settlement of the land was the next concern. The *Sawâd*, or rich plain of Chaldæa, having been taken, with some few exceptions, by force of arms, was claimed by the Arab soldiery as prize of war. The judgment and equity of Omar is conspicuous in the abatement of this demand. After counsel held with his advisers at Medina, the Caliph ordered that cultivators who had fled during the operations in Irac, as well as those who had kept to their holdings throughout, should be treated as *Zimmies*, or protected subjects, and confirmed in possession on moderate tribute. Royal forests and domains, lands of the nobles and of those who had opposed the Moslem arms, and the endowments of Fire-temples, were confiscated; but the demand for their division as ordinary prize was denied. Equitable distribution was impossible, and the attempt would have but bred bad blood amongst the people. The necessities also of the great system of canals, and of the postal and other services, as first charge upon the revenues, demanded that the public land should be kept intact. Such were the ostensible reasons. But a cause more weighty underlay the order. Omar would maintain the martial spirit of his followers at any cost, and render it perpetual. With him it was of first necessity that the Arabs should not settle anywhere but in the field, or other place of arms; nor engage at all in husbandry, lest becoming fixed to the soil, the temper militant should wane. The people of Arabia must in every land be men

A.H. 16.

of arms, ready at a moment's notice for the field, a race distinct and dominant. Therefore, much to the army's discontent, not only were the confiscated lands held undivided, but, from the border of the Syrian desert to the mountain range of Persia, the sale of any portion of the soil, whether confiscated or not, was forbidden. Thus there arose a double protection to the native tenantry, who under no pretext could be evicted from their lands. The country also, remaining in the hands of its own cultivators, was nursed, and became a rich and permanent source of revenue.

Crown lands and endowments of Kufa and Bussorah.

The confiscated lands scattered over the province were administered by Crown agents, and the profits shared between the captors and the state. The prize domains of Kufa,—conquered by the armies of Khalid and of Sad,—were much more extensive than those of Bussorah. Shortly after its foundation, the inhabitants of Bussorah sent representatives to urge that their endowments should be increased, and their income made more adequate to their responsibilities. "Kufa," said their spokesman, "is "a well-watered garden which yieldeth in season its "harvest of dates, while ours is brackish land. Part "bordereth on the desert, and part upon the sea, which "laveth it with a briny flood. Compared with Kufa, our "poor are many, and our rich are few. Grant us, therefore, of thy bounty." Recognising the justice of the plea, Omar made substantial addition to their endowments from the Crown lands of the Chosroes. But, although Kufa was richer, it had heavier obligations to discharge than the sister City. Its government had a wider range; and the charge of garrisons at various points, as Holwan, Mosul, and Kirkesia, had to be provided from the resources at the command of Sad.

Influence of the two cities on the future of Islam.

Kufa and Bussorah, unique in their origin, had a singular influence on the destinies of the Caliphate and of Islam at large. The vast majority of the population were of pure Arabian blood. The tribes which, scenting from afar the prey of Chaldæa and Persia, kept streaming into Chaldæa from every corner of Arabia, settled chiefly there.

A.H. 16. At Kufa the races coming from the south of Arabia predominated; at Bussorah, those coming from the north. Rapidly they grew into two great and luxurious Capitals, with an Arab population each of from 150,000 to 200,000 souls. On the literature, theology, and politics of Islam, the two cities had a greater influence than the whole Moslem world besides. There was abundance of time and opportunity. Service in the field being desultory and intermittent, the intervals were often long and frequent, but too readily spent in listless idleness. Excepting when enlivened by the fruits of some new victory, secluded harems afforded their lords little variety of recreation or amusement. Otherwise the time was whiled away in the converse of social knots; and in these, while they discussed the problems of the day, they loved still more to live in the past, to recall the marvellous story of their Faith, and fight their battles over again. Hence Tradition, and the two great Schools of Bussorah and Kufa. But the debates and gossip of these clubs too often degenerated into tribal rivalry and domestic scandal. The people grew petulant and factious; and both Cities became hotbeds of turbulence and sedition. The Bedouin element, conscious of its strength, was jealous of the Coreish, and impatient at whatever checked its own capricious humour. Thus factions sprang up which, controlled by the strong and wise arm of Omar, at length broke loose under weaker Caliphs, rent the unity of Islam, and brought on disastrous days which, but for its marvellous vitality, must have proved fatal to the Faith.

CHAPTER XVII

CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN SYRIA

A.H. 15. A.D. 636

Abu Obeida's advance on northern Syria, 14 A.H. 635 A.D.

TO recover the thread of Syrian warfare we must go back to the great victory on the banks of the Jordan. At the close of the 14th year of the Hegira, Abu Obeida, leaving Amru to follow up the success in Palestine, and Yezid as governor of Damascus, marched with the rest of his force northward upon Hims, the ancient Emessa, where the Emperor watched the progress of his enemies. Dazul Kelaa, who with his Himyar column had been ever since covering Damascus from attack on the north, now joined his chief. They had advanced but a little way, when they were stopped by two columns. Theodore, who commanded one of these, seeing Damascus no longer guarded, thought to make a sudden dash upon it. But Yezid, issuing with his garrison, assailed him in front; and Khalid's flying column was immediately in pursuit. Taken thus before and behind, Theodore's army was cut to pieces. The other column was put to flight by Abu Obeida. Meeting no further opposition, the Arabs continued their march, storming Balbek by the way.

Hims besieged. End of 14 A.H. Jan. 636 A.D.

Abu Obeida advanced straight upon Hims, and closely invested it. Heraclius, on the defeat of Theodore, retired hastily on Roha (Edessa), where he endeavoured to raise the Bedouins of Mesopotamia, and thus effect a diversion. The effort (as we have seen)[1] was defeated by Sad, who, making an inroad on Kirkesia, recalled the tribes to the defence of their desert homes. The siege of Hims,

---

[1] P. 131.

A.H. 15. prosecuted with vigour, was bravely resisted. But the expectation of succour died away; the severity of winter failed to make the Arabs retire, the sallies of the beleaguered garrison became less frequent, and their spirits fell. When the siege had been protracted many weeks, an earthquake breached the battlements. The Governor, finding the position no longer tenable, offered to capitulate; and the Moslems, unaware of the full extent of mischief, readily gave the same terms as to Damascus. In answer to the despatch announcing the capture, Omar bade Abu Obeida press boldly forward; and, promising further reinforcements, counselled him to gain the powerful tribes on the border, and strengthen thus his army.

Capitulates. Spring, 15 A.H. 636 A.D.

March northward. Antioch taken.

Leaving a garrison in Hims, Abu Obeida resumed his northward march. Hama, and other towns of inferior note, tendered submission. The fortified city of Laodicea alone showed an obstinate front; but the Arabs made a feint to withdraw, and then darting back in early morning through an open portal, seized the defences and overpowered the garrison. Advancing still to the north, Khalid, with great slaughter, defeated the Greeks near Kinnisrin (Chalcis), which was seized and dismantled. Aleppo next fell, after a brief resistance; and then Abu Obeida turned his arms westward upon Antioch. In this famous emporium of merchandise, art, and luxury, the broken troops of the Empire had rallied. And here, at length, within the great lines of circumvallation which ran along the surrounding heights, we might have expected Heraclius to make a bold stand. But no effort befitting the crisis seems even to have been thought of. A heavy battle, indeed, was fought on the wooded plain outside the walls; but the garrison was driven back, and the City, surrounded on all sides, capitulated. Such are the details, comprised as they are within a few lines, which tell us all we know of the loss to the Greeks of Northern Syria, from Damascus up to the hilly range of Asia Minor.

Northern Syria reduced.

Eastward, the Greeks made a last but feeble attempt to regain their footing. They were again hopelessly beaten, their leaders slain, and great numbers taken prisoners. The arm of the Empire was for the moment paralysed, and Syria, from the Euphrates to the seashore, brought under the sway of Islam. The Nomad tribes, as well as the settled inhabitants, became tributary and bound by engagements to keep their conquerors informed of any movements by the enemy. Before long, the Bedouins, who have ever sat loose to the trammels of religion, went for the most part over to the Moslem faith. But the Urban population, as a whole, resisted the inducements to abandon Christianity; and, although reduced, as the Coran demands, to an humbled and degraded state, they were yet treated with moderation, their Churches spared, and their worship respected. They either reconciled themselves to their unhappy fate, or retired unmolested into Byzantine territory.

Christian population.

When Heraclius beheld his armies, one after another, defeated, and his efforts to rally the Bedouin tribes end only in secession and hostile risings throughout Mesopotamia, he gave up Syria as lost, and fell back upon Samsat. But he was in peril even there. For, after reducing Membij and other fortresses within the Syrian frontier, Khalid made a dash into Cilicia, and ravaged Marash with the surrounding country. The Emperor, alarmed at his line of retreat thus threatened, retired altogether from the scene; and, relinquishing to the enemy the fairest and best loved Provinces of his realm, resolved to recross the Bosphorus. Wending his sad way westward, Heraclius (so the Arabian annalists tell us) ascended an eminence whence might be had a last glimpse of the wooded hills and sunny plains of Syria, now vanishing in the southern horizon. He turned to gaze: "Peace be with thee, Holy "and Blessed land!" he said; "Syria, fare thee well! "There is for me no more returning unto thee; neither "shall any Roman visit thee for ever, but in fear and "trembling, until the accursed Antichrist shall come." It was but ten years before, that the same Emperor, performing on foot a pilgrimage to Jerusalem through the same lovely province, to commemorate the recovery of the "true Cross" and his own signal victories in the East,

Heraclius retires to Constantinople.

A.H. 15. had cast aside a rude missive from the Arabian Prophet demanding submission to Islam. What seemed then the wild phantasy of a maniac was now an accomplished fact.[1]

Jabala, the Ghassanide Prince.

A similar despatch from Mahomet had been at the same time received by Jabala, last Prince of the Ghassanide dynasty; who thereupon had asked the Emperor's leave to chastise the insolent Arab, but was bidden instead to swell the imperial train at Jerusalem. And now Jabala was to share his Master's fate. At the head of the Beni Ghassân, he had fought loyally on the Byzantine side; but now, disheartened by the flight of Heraclius, he turned to Abu Obeida, and embraced Islam. Shortly after, splendidly clad, and with a pompous following, he visited Medina, where the people, familiar with the illustrious name, received him with peculiar honours. Thence he accompanied the Caliph on pilgrimage to Mecca. There a Bedouin chancing to tread on his flowing robe, caused him to stumble and fall. The haughty Prince struck the offender on the face. To his amazement he was summoned before the Caliph, who ordered, under the law of retaliation, that the Bedouin should have his satisfaction by returning the blow. "What!" cried Jabala; "I, the Prince of the "Ghassân, and he a common Bedouin of the desert!" "Yea," replied Omar; "for in Islam all are equal." Stung by the affront, Jabala retired at once to Constantinople; where, returning to the Christian faith, he was hospitably entertained at the Byzantine Court. The tale has been garnished by touches of romance, such as that, pining after his old haunts, he offered again to embrace Islam, if Omar would but give him one of his daughters to wife; so much, however, is certain that he died in exile, and left behind him at Constantinople a colony of Arab followers.

Exchange of gifts between Empress and Omar's wife.

It is interesting to be told that friendly relations subsisted at times between the Caliph and the Byzantine Court. Omar's wife sent to the Empress a royal gift of frankincense, and precious things fit for the toilet of a

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 357. The reader is again reminded that the history of the Byzantine war is taken exclusively from Arabian sources, and these but fragmentary and brief.

A.H. 15

lady; and the Empress in return sent her a beautiful necklace. Omar doubted whether the gift should be accepted, or whether it should not rather be held public property. Some said, "The Empress is not a subject; "she hath sent a present for Omm Kolthum; let her keep "it"; others said, "It is but a gift in return for a gift." But Omar replied: "It was an embassy at the cost of the "Moslems, and they have got this in return." So it was made over to the treasury; but he gave his wife the value of it from the privy purse.

Omar reconciled to Khalid.

In this campaign, the conduct and chivalry of Khalid made such an impression upon Omar that he received him back into favour, and appointed him to the government of Kinnisrin. "Verily," he said, "Khalid hath proved him-"self a prince among men. Blessed be the memory of "Abu Bekr, for verily he knew mankind better than I." The reconcilement, however, was not of long duration.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONQUEST OF PALESTINE

15 A.H. 636 A.D.

Territorial division of Palestine.

PALESTINE, according to the Arabs, is the tract that lies due west of the Dead sea. A line drawn from it to Mount Carmel, would be the northern boundary. North of that, again, the country, with the valley watered by the river, was called the province of the *Jordan*. Still farther north is *Syria* (*Shâm*), and to the east of Jordan, again, is the *Hauran*.

Palestine invaded.

The first inroads of the Arabs were, as we have seen, on the Hauran. Issuing from Arabia, their northward course had been along the highway to Damascus, the pilgrim route of the present day, east of the Dead sea. The base of operations throughout the Syrian campaign was at Jabia, a town on the high land to the east of the Sea of Galilee; from whence columns could be forwarded, by the great military roads, either to Damascus and the north, or westward to Tiberias, the Jordan, and Palestine. Soon after the siege of Damascus and battle of Fihl, the greater part of the Jordan province fell rapidly under the arms of Amru and Shorahbîl. In Palestine proper, with Egypt in its rear and Cæsarea open to the sea, the Byzantine power was still unbroken. Gaza, Ramleh, and Jerusalem were heavily garrisoned. The Patrician Artabun, commanding in Palestine, guarded Jerusalem with part of his army. With the remainder, taking his stand at Ajnadein, some distance to the west, he sought to hold the invaders now advancing from Beisan in check. This foolhardy general invited Amru to a conference, having laid

A.H. 15.

an ambush on the way to slay him. But he was outwitted by the wily Arab; and before long, cut off from his communications, was defeated in a decisive engagement, which took place at Ajnadein. Of the details we know little, and are simply told that "the battle of Ajnadein was "fierce and bloody as that of Wacûsa." After great slaughter, Artabun was driven back on Jerusalem. Amru encamped on the battlefield, his way being now clear to the Holy city. But he took the precaution first to secure his rear, still bristling with garrisons. One after another, Gaza, Lydda, Joppa, and other places, fell before his arms. Jerusalem, Ramleh, and Cæsarea alone held out.

Battle of Ajnadein. Spring, 15 A.H. 636 A.D.

Towards Jerusalem, full of associations sacred to the Moslems, Amru first directed his steps. On his approach, Artabun retired with his army into Egypt. The Patriarch sued for peace. One condition he made, that Omar should himself come to the Holy city, and there in person settle the capitulation. The Caliph, braving the objections of his court, at once set out, journeying direct for Jabia. It was a memorable occasion, the first progress of a Caliph beyond the limits of Arabia. Abu Obeida, Yezid, and Khalid hastened from the North to welcome him. A brilliant cavalcade, dressed in rich Syrian stuff, and gaily mounted, they rode forth to meet their Master on the border of Arabia. At sight of all their finery, Omar's spirit was stirred within him. He stooped down, and, gathering a handful of gravel,—"Avaunt!" he cried, "is it "thus attired ye come out to meet me, changed in two "short years! Verily, had it been two hundred, ye would "have deserved this;" as he flung the gravel at them. "Commander of the Faithful!" they replied; "this that "thou seest is but the outside; beneath it" (and they drew aside their robes), "behold our armour." "Enough," said Omar, still displeased; "Go forward." So journeying onwards, they alighted at Jabia. Shortly after, the camp was startled by the appearance of a strange troop of horse. It was a deputation from the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Terms were soon settled, and the treaty, duly

Jerusalem capitulates. End of 15 A.H., and of 636 A.D.

Omar's journey to Jabia

A.H. 15. witnessed, was carried by the envoys back to their Master; whereupon the gates of Jerusalem, and of Ramleh, were thrown open to the invading force. Amru and Shorahbîl thus relieved, left their camp and presented themselves at Jabia. Omar rode forth to meet them; they kissed his stirrup, while he, dismounting, affectionately embraced them both.

And Jerusalem. Dismissing the other generals to their respective commands, the Caliph, with Amru and Shorahbîl, crossed the Jordan below the Lake of Tiberias, and journeyed onward to Jerusalem. They gave him a palfrey to ride on, which pranced with jingling bells after the Syrian fashion. He disliked the motion. "What aileth the animal?" he said; "I know not who hath taught it this strange gait." So he dismounted and rode upon his own horse again. Arrived at Jerusalem, Omar received the Patriarch and Citizens with kindness and condescension. He granted the same privileges as to the most favoured cities; imposed an easy tribute, and confirmed possession of all the shrines and churches. Jerusalem was to the Moslem an object of intense veneration, not only as the cradle of Judaism and Christianity, but as the first *Kibla* of Islam, or sacred spot to which the Faithful turn in prayer; and also the shrine at which Mahomet alighted on the heavenly journey which he performed by night. At the crest of the Sacred mount is a rock, or stony projection, which tradition marked as Jacob's pillow. The Moslems fondly fancy this to be the spot in the "Farther Temple," from which the winged steed of Mahomet took its upward flight; and the eye of faith still traces an outline of the Prophet's foot imprinted on the rock as he sprang into his airy saddle. It was here that Omar laid the foundation of the Mosque which, to this day, bears his name.[1]

---

[1] Ali Bey, the traveller, tells us that when Mahomet stood upon it, the rock, "sensible of the happiness of bearing the holy burden, depressed itself, "and becoming soft like wax, received the print of his holy foot upon the "upper part. . . . This print is now covered with a large sort of cage of gilt "metal wire, worked in such a manner that the print cannot be seen on "account of the darkness within, but it may be touched with the hand "through a hole made on purpose. The believers, after having touched the

A.H. 15.

Christian tradition regarding the visit.

Mahometan tradition gives no further detail respecting this memorable visit. But Christian writers say that Omar accompanied the Patriarch over the city, visited the various places of Pilgrimage, and graciously inquired into their history. At the appointed hour, the Patriarch bade the Caliph perform his orisons in the church of the Resurrection, where they chanced to be. But he declined to pray either there, or in the church of Constantine where a carpet had been spread for him, saying kindly that if he did so his followers would take possession of the church for ever as a place where Moslem prayer had once been offered up. Omar also visited Bethlehem; and having prayed in the church of the Nativity, left a rescript with the Patriarch, who accompanied him on the pious errand, securing the Christians in possession of the building, with the condition that not more than one Mussulman should ever enter at a time. The stipulation was disregarded, and a Mosque was eventually erected there, as well as on the site of the church of Constantine.

" print, proceed to sanctify themselves by passing the hand over the face and " beard." (*Travels of Ali Bey*, vol. ii. p. 220.)

The heavenly journey is thus referred to in the Coran: " Praise be to Him, " who carried His servant by night to the FARTHER TEMPLE, the environs " of which we have blessed." *Sura*, xvii. (The " Farther Temple," in contradistinction to the " Nearer Temple," *i.e.* the Kaaba.) Jerusalem was the Kibla of Mahomet and his followers, up to the time of his flight from Mecca. In the second year after settling at Medina, he was suddenly instructed while at prayer to turn instead towards Mecca, and ever since, the Kaaba, and not Jerusalem, has been the Kibla of the Moslems. (*Life of Mahomet*, p. 117.)

The *Haram* is the sacred inclosure on the south-east corner of Mount Zion. The *Kubbet al Sakhra*, or " Dome of the Stone," has been built polygonal, to meet the shape of the " Stone," or rock referred to in the text, which gives its name to the Dome. This rock rises to a height of six or seven feet from a base, according to Ali Bey, 33 feet in diameter, or, according to others, 57 feet long and 43 wide. The architecture is Byzantine, and Greek builders were no doubt engaged in its construction. There is probably little, if anything, of Christian remains in the present Haram.

[Further inquiry into *Omar's Mosque*, might be of interest. The following is the opinion of an architect who has studied the question:—" What is commonly called the Mosque of Omar, built on the site of Solomon's Temple, " is not really the place where Omar went to pray. The real spot is near the " Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and it is a misnomer to speak of the *Aksa* " as the Mosque of Omar." 3rd. Ed.]

A.H. 15.

Omar returns to Medina.

Whatever the truth in these traditions, Omar did not prolong his stay in Jerusalem. Having settled the matter for which he came, the only other duty he performed was to divide Palestine into two provinces; one he attached to Jerusalem, and the other to Ramleh. He then returned by the way he came back again to Medina.

Causes facilitating conquest of Syria.

Thus was Syria, from the farthest north to the border of Egypt, within the space of three years, lost to Christendom. One reflects with wonder at the feeble resistance of the Byzantine power, military and naval, and of its renowned strongholds, to this sudden inroad. The affinity of the Syrian Bedouins to the Arabs no doubt facilitated the conquest. There was also an element of weakness in the settled population; luxurious living had made the race effeminate, and unable to resist the onset of wild and fanatic invaders. Still worse, they had no heart to fight. What patriotic vigour might have still survived, was lost in religious strife, and rival sects rejoiced each in the humiliation of its neighbour. Loyalty was smothered by bitter jealousies, and there are not wanting instances of active assistance rendered by Jews and Christians to the enemy. There may have been even a sense of relief in the equal, though contemptuous, licence which the haughty conquerors conceded to all alike. But there was a deeper cause, — the decrepitude of the Roman empire. The virtue and vigour needed to repel the shock of barbarian invasion were gone. And while northern hordes gradually amalgamated with the nations which they overran, the exclusive faith and intolerant teaching of Islam kept the Arabs a race distinct and dominant.

The Arabs do not settle in Syria as in Chaldæa.

The conquerors did not spread themselves abroad in Syria as in Chaldæa. They founded here no such Arabian towns and military settlements as Bussorah and Kufa. The country and climate were also less congenial. Though a land of brooks of water, of vines and fig-trees, of oil-olive and honey, still the Syrian shores offered fewer attractions to the Arabian than the hot and sandy plains of Irac with their familiar garb of tamarisk and date. The Arabs came to Syria as conquerors; and as conquerors they settled largely, particularly the southern tribes, in Damascus, Hims, and other centres of administration. But the body of native Syrians, urban and rural, remained after the conquest substantially the same as before; and through long centuries of degradation they clung, as the surviving remnant still clings, to their ancestral faith.

Humiliation of Jews and Christians.

We read in later days of the "Ordinance of Omar," regulating the conditions of Christian communities throughout Islam. But it would be a libel on that tolerant Ruler to credit him with the greater part of these observances. It is true that the stamp of inferiority according to the divine injunction, *Fight against the people of the Book, Jews and Christians, until they pay tribute with their hands and are humbled,*[1] was branded on them from the first; but the worst disabilities of the intolerant "Ordinance" were not imposed till a much later period. Introduced gradually, these became, by use and habit, the law of the land. At first the exactions of the Conquerors, besides the universal tribute, were limited to the demand of a yearly supply of oil-olive and other food, and the obligation to entertain for three days Moslem travellers. But when the Caliphate was established at Damascus and at Baghdad, its pride could no longer brook even the semblance of equality, and hence the badge of inferiority at every step;—the dress of both sexes and their slaves must be distinguished by stripes of yellow; forbidden to appear on horseback; if they rode even on mule or ass, the stirrups and knobs of the saddle must be of wood; their graves level with the ground, and the mark of the devil on the lintel of their doors; the children prohibited from being taught by Moslem masters; and the race, however able or well qualified, proscribed from aspiring to any high office of emolument or trust; besides the existing churches spared at the conquest, no new building to be erected for the purposes of worship; free entry into all the Holy places allowed at pleasure to any Moslem; no cross to remain outside, nor any church bell rung. Christians were also debarred from holding processions in the street at Easter

"Ordinance of Omar," the growth of time.

---

[1] *Sura* ix. 30.

A.H. 15. and other solemn seasons; in short, they must abstain from everything, whether by outward symbol, word, or deed, in rivalry or derogation of the royal faith. Such was the so-called *Code of Omar.* Gradually infringing the just rights of Jews and Christians, and enforced with more or less stringency in different lands and under various dynasties, it was, and still, at least in name, remains the law of Islam. One must admire the rare tenacity of the subject Faith, which, with but scanty light and hope, held its ground through weary ages of insult and depression, and still survives to see the dawning of a brighter day.

East cut off from the West.

I have spoken of the loss of Syria as the dismemberment of a limb from the Byzantine empire. In one respect it was something more. For their own safety, the Greeks dismantled a broad belt on the border of hostile and now barbarous Syria. The towns and fortresses within this tract were razed, and the inhabitants withdrawn. And so the neutral zone became a barrier against travel to and fro. For all purposes, social, religious, and commercial, the road was for generations closed. Pilgrimage, it is true, and commerce, from the West, could be maintained by sea; but in respect of communication by land, the East for the time was severed from the West.

Silence of Byzantine annalists.

"The abomination of desolation stood in the Holy "place." The cradle of Christianity, Zion, the joy of the whole earth, was trodden under foot, and utterly cut off from the sight of its devoted worshippers. And all is told by the Byzantine writers in a few short lines; while the pen of the Christian annalist refused, as well it might, to write the sad story of cowardice and shame.

CHAPTER XIX

RISING IN NORTHERN SYRIA

17 A.H. 638 A.D.

Rising in Northern Syria.

In the sixth year of Omar's Caliphate, a desperate effort was made by the Greeks, at one moment not without some prospect of success, to shake off the Moslem yoke and recover possession of Northern Syria.

Greeks support Bedouin rising, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.

The movement is attributed to an appeal from the Christian tribes of Upper Mesopotamia, who besought the Emperor to save them from falling under the adversary's sway. Although the strongholds of Mesopotamia had fallen into the hands of Sad, yet their garrisons had little control over the wandering Bedouins; and many of the Christian tribes still looked for support to the Persian or Byzantine rule. The maritime power of the West was yet untouched. Cæsarea with its naval supports remained proof against landward attack; and the whole seacoast was kept unsettled by the fear, or by the hope, that a fleet might at any time appear. The Emperor now promised the dwellers in Mesopotamia to second their efforts by way of the sea. An expedition was directed from Alexandria against Antioch, while the Bedouins gathered in great hordes around Hims. Thus seriously threatened, Abu Obeida called in his outlying garrisons. But finding the enemy too strong to be dispersed by the force at his disposal, he sent an urgent summons for assistance to Medina. Thereupon Omar ordered Sad to despatch at once a strong column from Kufa under Cacaa for the relief of Hims; and likewise to effect a diversion in Upper Mesopotamia. Meanwhile the Greeks had landed from

A.H. 17. their ships. Antioch threw open her gates to them; and Kinnisrin, Aleppo, and other towns in the north, were in full revolt. A council of war was called. Khalid was for giving battle, but Abu Obeida, feeling too weak to cope with the now combined forces of the Bedouins and Greeks, retired to Hims; and there, hemmed in by enemies, awaited the succour advancing from Kufa. So grave did Omar himself regard the crisis, that, quitting Medina for the second time, he journeyed to Jabia, intending to march in person with the reinforcements northwards. But while on his journey, a change had already come over the scene. Their prolonged absence in the distant north had alarmed the Bedouins for the safety of their desert homes, so that, returning south, they began to forsake the Emperor's cause. Seeing now his opportunity, Abu Obeida issued from his fortress, and after a severe engagement routed the enemy, who fled in confusion, and before the arrival of Cacaa were already totally dispersed. Omar returned to Medina, delighted at the result. He specially commended the alacrity of the Kufa column:—"The Lord "reward them," he wrote to Sad, "for their ready gathering "and speedy march to the succour of their beleaguered "brethren."

Abu Obeida puts enemy to flight.

Campaign in Northern Mesopotamia, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.

It was the last effort of Constantinople to expel the invader from Syria, whose yoke was now plainly not to be shaken off. The diversion attempted in Mesopotamia had also the opposite effect of reducing that province to its farthest limits. Not content with this, the infant faith, becoming conscious of its giant strength, began to stretch itself still farther north. Success in Mesopotamia was followed up by a campaign in Asia Minor; and the name of Iyadh, under whom even Khalid did not disdain to serve, begins to figure as one of terror in the brief Byzantine record. Nisibin, Roha, and other strong places on the frontier were taken or recaptured, and part even of Armenia overrun.

Christian tribes. Beni Iyadh.

Most of the Bedouin tribes in Mesopotamia embraced Islam. There were exceptions, and the story of Beni Iyadh is singular. They migrated to the north, and found an asylum in Byzantine territory. But Omar, nettled at their disappearance, and fearing lest they should remain a thorn in his side, demanded their extradition, on pain of expelling all Christian tribes living under his protection. The Emperor, unwilling to expose these to ill-treatment, complied with the demand. Equally remarkable is the tale of the Beni Taghlib. They tendered submission to Welîd, who, solicitous for the adhesion of this famous race, pressed them with some rigour to abjure their ancient faith. Omar was displeased ;—"Leave them," he wrote, "in the profession of the Gospel. It is only within the "Arabian peninsula, where are the Holy places, that "none but a Moslem tribe is to remain." Welîd was removed from his command ; and it was enjoined on his successor to stipulate only that the usual tribute should be paid, that no member should be hindered from embracing Islam, and that children should not be educated in the Christian faith. The tribe, deeming in its pride the payment of "tribute" an indignity, sent a deputation to the Caliph :—They were willing, they said, to pay the tax, if only it were levied under the same name as that taken from the Moslems. The liberality of Omar allowed the concession ; and the Beni Taghlib enjoyed the singular privilege of being assessed as Christians at a "double *Tithe*," instead of paying the obnoxious badge of subjugation.

Beni Taghlib allowed to pay tithe.

The last place to hold out in Syria was Cæsarea. It fell in the fifth year of Omar's Caliphate. Amru had sat long before it. But, being open to the sea, and the battlements landward strong and well manned, it resisted his efforts ; and although Yezid sent his brother Muavia with reinforcements from Damascus, the siege was prolonged for several years. Sallies persistently made by the garrison, were driven back with equal constancy : but in the end, the treachery of a Jew revealed a weak point in the defences ; the city was carried by storm and with prodigious carnage. Four thousand prisoners of either sex were despatched with the royal booty to Medina, and there sold into slavery.[1]

Fall of Cæsarea, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.

---

[1] The Jew betrayed the town by showing the Arabs an aqueduct, through which they effected an entrance. The population was mixed ; 70,000 Greeks :

A.H. 17.

Khalid brought to trial, 17–18 A.H. 638–9 A.D.

The unfortunate Khalid again incurred Omar's displeasure. He came back from the campaign in the north to his seat of government at Kinnisrin greatly enriched with the spoils of war. In hopes of his bounty, many old friends flocked around him. Amongst them was Ashath the Kinda chieftain, to whom he gave the princely largess of one thousand pieces of gold. Again, at Amida, Khalid had indulged in the luxury of a bath mingled with wine, the odour whereof as he came forth still clung about his person. On both charges he was arraigned. About the second, there could be no question; the use of wine, even in a bath, was a forbidden thing, and Khalid now forswore the indulgence. The other offence was graver in the Caliph's eyes. Either the gift was booty of the army; or, if Khalid's own to give away, he was guilty of culpable extravagance. Whichever it was, he deserved to be deposed from his command. In such terms a rescript was addressed to Abu Obeida, and sent by the hands of a courier charged to see that the command was fully carried out. Khalid was to be accused publicly; his helmet taken off; his hands bound with his head-kerchief; and so arraigned he was to declare the truth.

Arraigned for malversation before Abu Obeida.

Abu Obeida had an ungracious task, seeing that to the degraded warrior he was beholden for his victories in Syria. But Omar's word was law. And so he summoned Khalid from Kinnisrin, proclaimed an assembly in the Mosque of Hims, and, standing in the pulpit, placed Khalid in their midst. Then the courier put the Caliph's question — From whence the money given to Ashath came? Khalid, confounded at the unexpected charge, made no reply. Pressed by his friends, still he remained silent. Abu Obeida himself embarrassed, a painful pause

---

30,000 Samaritans; and 200,000 (?) Jews. It was a sad fate that of the captives. Multitudes of Greeks, men and women, pined miserably in strange lands in hopeless servitude. Amongst these must have been many women of gentle birth degraded now to menial office; or if young and fair to look upon, reserved for a worse fate,—liable, when their masters became tired of them, to be sold into other hands. No wonder that Al Kindy in his Apology inveighs, with scathing denunciation, against the proceedings of the Moslems in these early wars.

ensued. At last Bilâl, privileged as the Muedzzin of the Prophet, stepped forth, and with stentorian voice cried, *Thus and thus hath the Commander of the Faithful said, and it is incumbent on us to obey;* so saying, he unwound the kerchief from the head of Khalid, bound his hands therewith, and took his helmet off. The great warrior, to whom Islam so greatly owed its conquests, stood as a felon before the congregation. Bilâl repeated the question, and Khalid at length replied, "The money was my own." At once Bilâl unbound his hands, and, replacing the helmet on his head, wound round the kerchief as before, and said, "We honour thee still, even as we did honour "thee before, one of our chiefest captains." But Abu Obeida was silent; and Khalid, stunned by the disgrace, stood speechless and bewildered. Abu Obeida had not the heart to proclaim his deposition; but still spoke kindly to him as one who had his confidence. Omar, informed of what had passed, made allowance for Abu Obeida's delicacy, and summoned Khalid to Medina. Prompt to obey, though sore at heart, Khalid first returned to his seat of Government; and both there and at Hims, bidding adieu to his friends and people, complained of the ingratitude of the Caliph, who scrupled not to use him in times of difficulty, but cast him aside when, through his aid, he had reached the summit of his Sovereign power. Arrived in the Caliph's presence, Khalid broke out in bitter reproach:—"I swear that "thou hast treated despitefully a faithful servant to whom "thou owest much. I appeal from thee to the whole "body of the Faithful." "Whence came that money?" was Omar's only answer. The question was repeated day by day; till at last, galled by the charge, Khalid made answer: "I have naught but the spoil which the "Lord hath given me in the days of Abu Bekr, as well "as in thine own. Whatever thou findest over 60,000 "pieces, hath been gained in thy Caliphate; take it if "thou wilt." So his effects were valued, and the estimate reaching 80,000, Omar confiscated the difference. But he still affected to hold the great General in honour and

Summoned to Medina,

A.H. 17. regard. Accordingly, he sent a rescript to the various provinces, announcing that he had deposed Khalid from his government, not because of tyranny or fraud, but because he deemed it needful to remove a stumbling-block out of the way of the people, who were tempted to put their trust in an arm of flesh, instead of looking alone to the Giver of all victory.

and deposed.

Dies in penury and neglect, 21 A.H. 642 A.D.

So closed the career of Khalid. The first beginning of Omar's alienation was the affair of Mâlik ibn Noweira, followed by acts of tyranny in Chaldæa which grated on his sense of clemency and justice. But these acts had long since been condoned; and therefore his conduct now was both ungenerous and unjust. He used the "Sword "of God" so long as he had the need, and when victory was gained, he cast the same ungratefully away. Khalid retired to Hims, and did not long survive. His manner of life when in the full tide of prosperity, may be gathered from the brief notice that in the Plague, from which he fled with his family to the desert, he is said to have lost no fewer than forty sons. Soon after, in the eighth year of Omar's caliphate, he died. In his last illness he kept showing the scars which covered his body, marks of bravery and unflinching prowess. "And now," he said, "I die even as a coward dieth, or as the camel breatheth "its last breath." His end illustrates forcibly the instability of this world's fame. The hero who had borne Islam aloft to the crest of victory and glory, ended his days in penury and neglect.

CHAPTER XX

EXPULSION OF JEWS AND CHRISTIANS FROM ARABIA. REGISTER OF ARAB TRIBES. CIVIL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION. THE CORAN.

14–15 A.H. 635–636 A.D.

Domestic events, 14–15 A.H.

WE must now revert to one or two matters of domestic interest.

Expulsion of Jews and Christians from Arabia.

Arabia, as the nursery of legions devoted to fight for Islam, must be purged of strange religions. So soon therefore as victory was secured in Syria and Chaldæa, Omar proceeded to execute an act of harshness, if not of questionable equity.

Christian inhabitants removed from Najran,

In the centre of Arabia lies the province of Najran, inhabited from of old by a Christian people. Mahomet concluded a treaty with their Chiefs and Bishops, which on payment of a settled tribute secured them in the undisturbed profession of their ancestral faith. Throughout the rebellion they remained loyal to their engagements, and Abu Bekr renewed the treaty. Worthy descendants of a persecuted race, they resisted the blandishments of Islam; and as a penalty they must now quit their native soil, consecrated by the ashes of their martyred forefathers.[1] They were ordered to depart and take land in exchange elsewhere. Some migrated to Syria; but the greater part settled in the vicinity of Kufa, where the colony of Najrania long maintained the memory of their expatriation. The rights conferred by the Prophet, so far

---

[1] For the story of persecution and martyrdom under the tyrant Dzu Nawas, a century before Islam, see *Life of Mahomet*, p. lxxxi. For the treaty of Mahomet, p. 445.

A.H. 14-15.

and Jews from Kheibar.

as the altered circumstances might admit, were respected by successive Rulers; and the tribute, with decreasing numbers, lightened from time to time. Some years after, the Jews of Kheibar, a rich vale two or three days north of Medina, met a similar fate. Their claim was not so strong; for, conquered by Mahomet, they had been left on sufferance with their fields at a rent of half the produce. In lieu of this partial right, they received a money payment, and were sent away to Syria. Various pretexts are urged for the expatriation in either case. But underlying is the dogma, founded on the supposed dying behest of Mahomet, — *In Arabia there shall be no faith but the faith of Islam.* The recruiting field of Islam must be sacred ground.[1]

Arabs share in spoil of war and revenues of conquered lands.

The Arabian nation was the champion of Islam; and to fight its battles every Arab was jealously reserved. He must be soldier, and nothing else. He might not settle down in any conquered lands as owner of the soil; while for merchandise or other labour, a warlike life offered little leisure. Neither was there any need. The Arabs lived on the fat of conquered provinces, and subject peoples served them. Of booty taken in war, four-fifths were distributed to the army on the field, the remaining Fifth reserved for the State; and even that, after public obligations were discharged, shared among the Arabian people. In the reign of Abu Bekr this was a simple matter. But under Omar the spoil of Syria and of Persia, in ever-increasing volume, poured into the treasury of Medina, where it was distributed almost as soon as received. What was easy in small beginnings, by equal sharing or discretionary preference, became now a heavy task. And there arose, also, new sources of revenue in the land assessment and poll-tax of conquered countries, the surplus of which, after defraying civil and military charges, became equally with spoil of war, patrimony of the Arab nation.

At length, in the second or third year of his Caliphate, Omar determined that the distribution should be regulated

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 475.

New rule of distribution.

on a fixed and systematic scale. The income of the Commonwealth was to be divided, as heretofore, amongst the Faithful as their heritage, but upon rules of precedence befitting the military and theocratic groundwork of Islam. For this end three points were considered:—priority of conversion, relationship to the Prophet, and military service. The widows of Mahomet,—"Mothers of the Faithful,"—took precedence with an annual allowance of 10,000 pieces each;[1] and so also all his kinsmen on a scale corresponding with their affinity. The famous Three hundred of Bedr had 5000 each;[2] presence at Hodeibia and the *Pledge of the Tree*[3] gave a claim to 4000; those engaged in quelling the Rebellion had 3000; those who had fought in the great battles of Syria and Chaldæa, and also sons of "the men of Bedr," had 2000; and such as took the field after the actions of Cadesiya and the Yermuk, 1000. Warriors of distinction received an extra grant of 500. And so they graduated downwards to 200 pieces for the latest levies. Nor were the households forgotten. Women had the tenth of a man's share. Wives, widows, and children had each their proper stipend; and in the register, every new-born infant had a title to be entered with an allowance of ten pieces, rising with its age. Even Arab slaves (so long as any of the blood remained in slavery) had their portion.

All other races form a lower caste.

Thus every soul was rated at its worth. But the privilege was confined to those of Arab blood. A very few exceptions there were of distinguished Persian chiefs; but their mention only proves the stringency of the rule. The whole nation, man, woman and child, of the militant Arab race, was subsidised. In theory, the rights of all Believers of what blood soever are the same. "Ye are "one brotherhood," said Mahomet at the Farewell pilgrimage; and as he spake placed two fingers of one

---

[1] Ayesha was allotted 2000 extra, "for the love the Prophet bare her," but some say she declined it. Mahomet's two slave-concubines were at first rated only at 6000; but at the desire of the other widows were placed on an equality with them. The grandsons had 5000 each.

[2] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 226.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 346, 402.

A.H. 11-15.

hand upon the other, to enforce the absolute equality ruling in Islam.[1] But in point of fact, the equality was limited to the Arab nation. The right of any brother of alien race was but a dole of food sufficient for subsistence, and no more.

Omar's rule disarms Arab jealousies.

A people dividing amongst them the whole revenues, spoil, and conquests of the State, on the basis of an equal brotherhood, is a spectacle probably without parallel in the world. The distinction also of early conversion was well conceived. In no other way could the susceptibilities of tribal rivalry have been reconciled. The proud chiefs of the Coreish, who did not join the Prophet till after the fall of Mecca, refused any allowance but the highest: "We know of none nobler than ourselves," they said; "and less than other we will not take." "Not so," answered Omar; "I give it by priority of faith, and not "for noble birth." "It is well," they replied; and no reason but this would have satisfied them. There were two further sources of danger: first, the rivalry between the Bedouin tribes and the "Companions" or men of Mecca and Medina; and, second, the jealousies that sprang up between the house of Hashim (the Prophet's kinsman) on the one hand, and the Omeyyads and other branches of the Coreish on the other;—jealousies which by and by developed into larger proportions, and threatened the very existence of the Caliphate; but which, held in check by Omar, were now for a time allayed by assuming an acknowledged test as the ground of precedence.

Arabs the aristocracy of the Moslem world.

The blue blood of Arabia was universally recognised as the aristocracy of the Moslem world. Rank and stipend now assigned, and even rewards for special gallantry in the field, descended by inheritance. Implied in this inheritance was the continuing obligation to fight for the Faith: by it martial genius was maintained, and employment perpetuated for the standing army of the Caliphate. A nation composed thus of ennobled soldiery, pampered, factious and turbulent, formed too often a dangerous element of sedition and intrigue. But, nevertheless, it was the real backbone of Islam, the secret of conquest, the stay of the Caliphate. Crowded harems multiplied the race with marvellous rapidity. The progeny of the Arab sire (whatever the mother) was kept sedulously distinct, so as never to mingle with the conquered races. Wherever Arabs went they formed a class apart and dominant,—the Nobles and Rulers of the land. Subject peoples, even if they embraced Islam, were of a lower caste; they could aspire to nothing higher than, as "Clients" of some Arab chief or tribe, to court patronage and protection. Thus the Arabians set themselves apart, as a nation militant, for the sacred task of propagating Islam. Even after the new-born zeal of the Faith had evaporated, the chivalry of the Arabs as a race wholly devoted to arms, was, owing mainly to Omar's foresight, maintained in full activity for two centuries and a half. The Nation was, and continued to be, an army mobilised; the camp, and not the city, their home; their business, arms;—a people whose calling it was to be ready for warlike expedition at a moment's notice.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 458.

Register of all Arabs entitled to stipend.

To carry out this vast design, a Register was kept of every man, woman and child, entitled to a stipend from the State—in other words, of the whole Arab race employed in the interests of Islam. This was easy enough for the upper ranks, but a herculean task for the hundreds of thousands of ordinary families which kept streaming forth to war from the Peninsula, and which, by free indulgence in polygamy, were multiplying rapidly. The task, however, was simplified by the strictly tribal disposition of the forces. Men of a tribe fought together; and the several Corps and Brigades being thus territorially arranged in clans, the Register assumed the same form. Every soul was entered under the tribe and clan whose lineage it claimed. And to this exhaustive classification we owe the elaborate, and to some extent artificial, genealogies and tribal traditions of Arabia before Islam.

The Roll itself, as well as the office for its mainten-

A.H. 14-15.

The *Dewan* of Omar.

ance and for pensionary account, was called the *Dewan* or Exchequer. The State had by this time an income swollen by tribute of conquered cities, poll-tax of subjugated peoples, land assessments, spoil of war, and tithes. The first charge was for the Revenue and Civil administration; the next for Military requirements, which soon assumed a sustained and permanent form; the surplus was for the support of the Nation. The entire revenues of Islam were thus expended as soon almost as received; and Omar took special pride in seeing the treasury emptied to the last dirhem. The accounts of the various provinces were at the first kept by natives of the country in the character to which they were accustomed — in Syria by Greeks, and in Chaldæa by Persians. At Kufa this lasted till the time of Hajjâj, when, an Arab assistant having learned the art, the Arabic system of record and notation was introduced.

Vastness of Arab exodus.

We are not told the number enrolled on the Dewan of Omar, but the population of Kufa and Bussorah may give us some idea of the vast exodus in progress from Arabia, and the rapid strides by which the crowded harems multiplied the race. Arab ladies, as a rule, married only Arab husbands; but the other sex, besides unlimited concubinage with slave-girls, were free to contract marriage with the women of conquered lands, whether converts or "People of the Book." And although wives of Arab blood took precedence in virtue of rank and birth, the children of every Arab father, whether the mother were slave or free, Moslem, Jew, or Christian, were equal in legitimacy. And so the nation multiplied. Looking also to the further drain upon Arabia to meet continuing war, we shall not greatly err if we assume that before Omar's death the Arabs beyond the limits of Arabia proper, numbered half a million, and before long were doubled, and perhaps quadrupled.

Provincial administration.

Civil administration followed close on conquest. In Chaldæa, the great network of canals was early taken in hand. The long-neglected embankments of the Tigris and Euphrates were placed under special officers. Syria and Irac were measured field by field: and the assessment established on a uniform basis. In Irac, the agency of the great landholders was taken advantage of, as under the previous Dynasty, for the maintenance of order and collection of the revenue. In addition to the armies in the field, a reserve of cavalry was maintained at the headquarters of the several provinces, ready for emergency. The corps at Kufa numbered 4000 lances, and there were eight such centres. Reserves for forage were also set apart. The cost of these measures formed a first charge upon provincial revenue.

Reserves of cavalry.

The "Collection" of the Coran — that is, gathering into one the various "Revelations" of Mahomet—belongs to the early years of this reign. The task was already begun by Abu Bekr, at the instance of Omar himself, who seeing that many of the "Readers" (those who had the Coran by heart) had perished at the "Garden of "Death," feared lest otherwise "much of the sacred text "might be lost." The duty was assigned to Zeid who, as well as others, had from time to time, taken down passages direct from Mahomet's dictation. Many of the "Suras," or chapters, were already used privately, and for the Public services, in a complete and settled form. In addition, Zeid now sought out from every possible quarter, whatever had at any time emanated from the Prophet, in the way of revelation, from the earliest period of his ministry—"whether inscribed on date-leaves, shreds "of leather, shoulder-blades, stony tablets, or the hearts "of men." Having gathered exhaustively the diverse and often fugitive materials, he carefully and with reverent hand dovetailed them together, just as they were found, in continuous form. A certain regard to time and subject was no doubt observed in the pious task; but still evidently with a good deal of haphazard collocation; and to this may be ascribed much of the obscurity and incoherence that occasionally pervade the sacred text. The original manuscript thus completed was committed to Haphsa, Omar's daughter, one of the Prophet's widows, and continued to be the standard text until the time of Othman.

Coran, how collected.

CHAPTER XXI

FAMINE AND PLAGUE

18 A.H. 639 A.D.

The *Year of Ashes*, 18 A.H. 639 A.D.

THE fifth year of Omar's Caliphate was darkened by the double calamity of pestilence and famine. It is called "The Year of Ashes," for the dry air of the Hejaz was so charged with unslaked dust from the parched and sandy soil as to obscure the light of heaven by a thick and sultry haze.

Famine in Arabia.

In the northern half of the Peninsula the drought was so severe that Nature languished. Wild and timid creatures of the desert, tamed by want, came seeking food at the hand of man. Flocks and herds died of starvation, or became too attenuated for human food. Markets were deserted, and the people suffered extremities like those of a garrison long besieged. Crowds of Bedouins, driven by hunger, flocked to Medina, and aggravated the distress. Omar, with characteristic self-denial, refused any indulgence not shared with those about him. He swore that he would taste neither meat nor butter, nor even milk, until the people had food enough and to spare. On one occasion his servant obtained at a great price a skin filled with milk, and another with butter. Omar sent both away in alms. "I will not eat," he said, "of that which costeth "much; for how then should I know the trouble of my "people, if I suffer not even as they?" From coarse fare and oil-olive instead of milk and butter, the Caliph's countenance, naturally fresh and bright, became sallow and haggard.

Every effort was made to alleviate distress, and effective

Grain imported from Syria and elsewhere.

aid at last came from abroad. Abu Obeida brought 4000 beasts of burden laden with corn from Syria, which he distributed himself amongst the famished people. Amru despatched food from Palestine by camels, and also by shipping from the port of Ayla. Supplies came likewise from Chaldæa. The beasts that bore the burden were slain by twenties daily, and served, together with their freight, to feed the citizens of Medina. After nine months of sore trial, a solemn Assembly was called by Omar; and in answer (we are told) to a prayer offered up by Abbas, the Prophet's aged uncle, the heavens were overcast and rain descending in heavy showers drenched the land. Grass sprang rapidly, the Bedouins were sent back to their pasture-lands, and plenty again prevailed. Out of the calamity there grew a permanent traffic with the north, and the markets of the Hejaz continued long to be supplied from Syria, and eventually by sea from Egypt.

Plague in Syria.

The famine was followed, but in a different region, by an evil of still greater magnitude. The plague broke out in Syria; and, attacking with special virulence the Arabs at Hims and Damascus, devastated the whole province. Crossing the desert, it spread even as far as Bussorah. Consternation seized every rank. High and low fell equally before the scourge. Men were struck down and died as by a sudden blow. Omar's first impulse was to summon Abu Obeida to Medina for the time, lest he too should fall a victim to the fell disease. Knowing his chivalrous spirit, Omar veiled the purpose, and simply ordered him to come "on an urgent affair." Abu Obeida divined the cause, and choosing rather to share the danger with his people, begged to be excused. Omar, as he read the answer, burst into tears. "Is Abu Obeida dead?" they asked. "No, he is not dead," said Omar, "but it is "as if he were." The Caliph then set out himself for Syria, but was met on the confines by Abu Obeida and others from the scene of the disaster. A council was called, and Omar yielded to the wish of the majority that he should return home again. "What," cried some of his courtiers, "and flee from the decree of God?" "Yea,"

Omar holds Council on Syrian border.

A.H. 18.

replied the Caliph, wiser than they,—"if we flee, it is but "from the decree of God unto the decree of God." He then commanded Abu Obeida to carry the Arab population in a body out of the infected cities into the desert; and himself wended his way back to Medina.[1]

Arabs fly to Hauran.

Acting on the Caliph's wish, Abu Obeida lost no time in making the people fly to the high lands of the Hauran. He had reached as far as Jabia, when he too was struck down, and with his son fell a victim to the pestilence. Moadz, designated to succeed, died almost immediately after; and it was left for Amru to lead the panic-stricken folks to the hill-country, where the pestilence abated. Not less than five-and-twenty thousand perished in the visitation. Of a single family which had emigrated seventy in number from Medina, but four were left. Such was the deadliness of the scourge.

Death of Abu Obeida.

Omar's journey to Syria, autumn, 18 A.H. 639 A.D.

The country was disabled, and fears were entertained of an attack from the Roman armies. The terrible extent of the calamity showed itself in another way. A vast amount of property was left by the dead, and the gaps amongst the survivors caused much embarrassment in the succeeding claims. The difficulty grew so serious, that to settle this and other matters, Omar resolved on making a progress through his dominions. At first he thought of visiting Chaldæa, and thence by Mesopotamia, entering Syria from the north; but he abandoned the larger project, and confining his resolution to Syria, took the usual route. The way lay through the Christian town of Ayla, at the head of the Gulf of Acaba; and his visit here brings out well the simplicity and kindly feeling which he evinced toward his Christian subjects. He

Visits the Bishop of Ayla.

---

[1] During the discussion Abd al Rahman quoted a saying of Mahomet:—"If pestilence break out in a land, go not thither; if thou art there, flee not from it." Omar's views were more reasonable, and he justified them by this illustration:—"Suppose (he said) that ye alight in a valley, whereof one side is green with pasture, and the other bare and barren, whichever side ye let loose your camels upon, it would be by the decree of God; but ye would choose the brow that was green." And so he judged that in removing the people from the scene of danger to a healthier locality, he was making no attempt to flee from the decree of God.

A.H. 18.

rode on a camel with small pomp and following; and, minded to enter the village unrecognised, changed places with his servant, putting him in front. "Where is the Ameer?" cried the eager Citizens, streaming forth to witness the Caliph's advent. "He is *before* you," replied Omar with double meaning, as the camel moved slowly on. So the crowd hurried forward, thinking that the great Ruler was still beyond, and left Omar to alight unobserved at the house of the Bishop, with whom he lodged during the heat of the day. His coat, rent upon the journey, was given to his Host to mend. This the Bishop not only did, but had a lighter garment made for him, more suited to the oppressive travel of the season. Omar, however, preferred to wear his own.

Omar in Syria.

Proceeding onwards, the Caliph made the circuit of Syria. He visited the chief Moslem settlements, gave instructions for the disposal of the estates of the multitudes swept away by the plague, and himself decided doubtful claims. As both Abu Obeida and Yezid had perished in the pestilence, Omar now appointed Muavia, another son of Abu Sofian, to the Chief command in Syria, and thus laid the foundation of the Omeyyad dynasty. Muavia was a man of unbounded ambition, but wise and able withal; and he turned to good account his new position. The factions which glorified the claims of Aly and Abbas, and spurned the Omeyyad blood of Muavia, were yet unknown. Both Aly and Abbas had hitherto remained inactive at Medina. The latter, always weak and wavering, was now enfeebled by old age. The former, honoured, indeed, as the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and also for his wit and wisdom, was amongst the trusted counsellors of the Caliph, but possessed no special power or influence, nor any apparent ambition beyond a life of quiet indulgence in the charms of a Harem, varied ever and anon by fresh arrivals. Neither is there any reason to suppose that the bygone opposition to Islam of Abu Sofian and Hind, parents of Muavia, was now remembered against them. Sins preceding conversion, if followed by a consistent profession, left no stain upon the Believer. It was not

Appoints Muavia governor.

A.H. 18.

till the fires of civil strife burst forth that abuse was heaped upon the Omeyyad race for ancient misdeeds and enmity towards the Prophet, and political capital made of them. The accession, therefore, of Muavia at the present time to the Chief command in Syria excited no jealousy or opposition. It passed, indeed, as a thing of course, without remark.

Bilâl performs office of Muedzzin.

As Omar prepared to take final leave of Syria, a scene occurred which stirred to their depths the hearts of the Faithful. It was the voice of Bilâl, the Muedzzin of the Prophet, proclaiming the hour of prayer. The stentorian call of the aged African had not been heard since the death of Mahomet; for he refused to perform the duty for any other. He followed the army to Syria, and there, honoured for the office he had so long discharged at Medina, lived in retirement. The Chief citizens of Damascus now petitioned Omar that on this last occasion, Bilâl should be asked once more to perform the Call to prayer. The aged man consented, and as from the top of the Great mosque the well-known voice arose clear and loud with the accustomed cry, the whole assembly, recalling vividly the Prophet at daily prayers, was melted into tears, and strong warriors, with Omar at their head, lifted up their voices and sobbed aloud. Bilâl died two years after.[1]

Pilgrimage, xii. 18 A.H. Dec. 639 A.D.

On returning to Medina, Omar set out on the annual Pilgrimage to Mecca, at which he presided every year of his Caliphate. But this was the last journey which he made beyond the limits of Arabia.

---

[1] For Bilâl and his office of Muedzzin, see *Life of Mahomet*, p. 189.

CHAPTER XXII

CONQUEST OF EGYPT

19–20 A.H. 640–641 A.D.

THE year following was one of comparative repose. Islam continued to push its way now steadily into Persia. Reserving the advance in that direction, we shall first narrate the conquest of Egypt.

19 A.H. 640 A.D.

Amru casts an eye on Egypt.

The project is due to Amru. After the fall of Cæsarea, the able and ambitious general chafed at a life of inaction in Palestine. On the Caliph's visit to Syria, he urged a descent upon Egypt, at once to enfeeble the Enemy's power and augment their own. The advice was good; for Egypt, once the granary of Rome, now fed Constantinople with corn. Alexandria, though inhabited largely by Natives, drew its population from every quarter. It was the second City in the empire, the seat of commerce, luxury, and letters. Romans and Greeks, Arabs and Copts, Christians, Jews, and Gentiles, mingled here on common ground. But the life was essentially Byzantine; although the government was ever and anon interrupted by revolt and by the uprising of the native Egyptians, both among themselves, and against their foreign rulers. The vast population was provided, in unexampled profusion, with theatres, baths, and places of amusement.[1] A forest of ships congregated in its safe and spacious harbour, from whence communication was maintained with all the seaports of the realm.

---

[1] The male population alone is given at 600,000. There were 70,000 (according to others 40,000) male Jews of an age to pay the poll-tax, and 200,000 Greeks, of whom 30,000 effected their escape by sea before the siege; 4000 baths, 400 theatres, and 12,000 vessels of various size.

A.H. 19–20.

Alexandria was thus a European, rather than an Egyptian, city.

Egypt disaffected towards Byzantine rule.

It was otherwise with the rich valley beyond. Emerging from the luxurious city, the traveller dropped at once from the pinnacle of civilisation to the dreary wastes of Monasticism, and the depths of poverty and squalor. Egypt was then, as ever, the servant of nations. The overflowing produce of well-watered fields served but to feed the great cities of the empire. And the people of the soil, ground down by exaction and oppression, were ever ready to rise against their rulers. Hatred was embittered here, as elsewhere, by the never-ceasing endeavour of the Byzantine rulers to convert the inhabitants to Orthodoxy, while the Copts held tenaciously by the Monophysite creed.[1] Chronic disaffection pervaded the land, and the people courted deliverance from the overbearance of Byzantine rule. There were at the time in Egypt no Bedouin tribes with Arabian sympathies for Moslem conquest; but elements of even greater danger had long been here at work, which made the change of yoke at first sight not unwelcome.

Amru invades Egypt, 19 or 20 A.H. 640–1 A.D.

It was in the nineteenth or twentieth year of the Hegira that Amru, having obtained the hesitating consent of the Caliph, set out from Palestine for Egypt. His army, even with bands of Bedouins, lured on the way by hope of plunder, did not exceed 4000. Soon after he had left, Omar, concerned at the smallness of his force, would have recalled him; but finding that he was already too far gone, sent Zobeir with heavy reinforcements after him. The army of Amru was thus swelled at last to an imposing array of some 15,000, many of them veterans and warriors of renown.

Reduces Upper Egypt.

Amru entered Egypt by Arish, and then turning to the left, passed onward through the desert, and so, after the siege and capture of Belbeis reached the easternmost estuary of the Nile. Along this branch of the river he marched towards Upper Egypt, where Mucoucus, the Copt, was governor,—the same who sent Mary, the Egyptian

---

[1] See Palmer's *Origines Liturgicæ*, vol. i. p. 82; and *The Story of the Church of Egypt*, vol. i., noticed below.

A.H. 19–20.

slave-girl, and her sister as a gift to Mahomet.[1] On the way he routed several columns attempting to arrest the inroad; amongst them one commanded by his Syrian antagonist Artabun, who was slain in the encounter. Marching along the vale of the Nile, with channels from the swelling river, verdant fields, and groves of the fig-tree and acacia, Amru, towards the close of the year, reached at last the obelisks and ruined temples of Ain Shems (Heliopolis). There the Bishop procured for Mucoucus a truce of four days. At its close, an action took place, in which the Egyptians were driven back into the City, and the Byzantine force into their fortress, which was deemed impregnable. The opposition was at one time warm, for the Yemen troops gave way. Reproached for their cowardice, one replied, "We are but men, not iron or stone." "Be quiet, thou "yelping dog!" cried Amru. "If we are dogs," answered the angry Arab, "then what art thou but the commander "of dogs?" Amru made no reply, but called on a column of veterans to step forth; and before their fiery onset the Egyptians fled. "What chance," said the Copts one to another, "have we against men that have beaten both the "Chosroes and the Kaiser?" And, in truth, they deemed it little loss to be rid of the Byzantine yoke. The siege had already lasted several months, when a general assault was made. Zobeir with desperate valour, had successfully scaled the walls, when a deputation sent by Mucoucus obtained terms from Amru. The people were left free; but a capitation-tax was fixed of two dinars on every male adult who refused Islam, with other impositions similar to those of Syria. Many prisoners had been taken; and a

---

[1] See *Life of Mahomet*, p. 359. Mrs. Butcher gives us the origin of the name in the word *μεγαυχής*, similar to "His Excellency,"—a title of the *Pagarchs* or Native rulers recognised by the Byzantine government. The Arab pronunciation turns soft g into *k* or *c* (as in the case of Gupt or Egyptian into Copt), and the name consequently from *Megauches* into *Mucoucus*. She tells us there were several Pagarchs at the invasion; our Mucoucus, apparently the chief, being Governor of Babylon or Heliopolis in Upper Egypt. I gladly refer the reader to Mrs. Butcher's admirable work for details of the Arab invasion,—though many of the traditions which she gives from works of after-ages are to be received with caution. See *The Story of the Church of Egypt*, by E. L. Butcher. Smith, Elder & Co., 1897. Vol. i. ch. xxxii.

A.H. 19-20. Fifth part of these and of the spoil was sent to Medina. The same conditions were given to the Greek and Nubian settlers in Upper Egypt. But the Greeks, fallen now to the level of those over whom they used to domineer, and hated by them, were glad to make their escape towards the seacoast.

Marches on Alexandria, Amru lost no time in marching on Alexandria, so as to reach it before the Greek troops could rally there for its defence. On the way he put to flight several columns which sought to hinder his advance; and at last, towards the close of the year 640, presented himself before the City walls, which, offering on the land side a narrow and well-fortified front, was capable of obstinate resistance. From the sea also it was open to succour at the pleasure Feb. 641, of the Byzantine court. But during the siege Heraclius died, and the opportunity slipped away. Some of the outworks on the narrow isthmus were taken by storm; and, there appearing no prospect of succour, the spirit of the garrison began to flag. The Greeks took to their ships, and pusillanimously deserted the beleaguered city. And so things lasted throughout the greater part of the year. At last Mucoucus, who had retired to Alexandria, finding the place too weak for prolonged defence, offered to Which capitulates, 20 A.H. 641 A.D. capitulate, on the terms given to Upper Egypt, and on condition that the prisoners taken throughout the campaign were set free. The Caliph was referred to, and readily agreed. "Tribute," he replied, "is better than booty; "for it continueth, whereas spoil soon vanisheth, as if it "had not been. Touching the captives, such as remain, "except those taken in battle, shall be restored." And so the City escaped sack, and the Egyptian people became tributary to the Conquerors.[1]

---

[1] The remarks of Mrs. Butcher on the conquest are so apt and true, that I cannot forbear quoting them here:—

"Thus, in the December of the year 641, Egypt passed under the Moslem "yoke, from which—whether under Arab, Circassian, or Turk—she has never "since been able to free herself, and which slowly but surely has crushed out "her art, her civilisation, her learning, her religion, and well-nigh her very life; "for of the four (rather eight) millions who make up the present population "of Egypt, there are barely seven (rather nine) hundred thousand who can

Amru wished to fix his seat of government at Alexandria, but Omar would not allow him to remain so far away from his camp. So he returned to Upper Egypt. For several years his followers were engaged against the Nubians, and at last brought them under subjection in the direction of Dongola. A body of the Arabs crossed the Nile and settled in Ghizeh, on the western bank,—a movement which Omar permitted only on condition that a strong fortress was constructed there to prevent the possibility of surprise. The headquarters of the army were pitched near Memphis. Around them grew up a military station, called from its origin, *Fostat*, or "the Encampment." It expanded rapidly into the Capital of Egypt, the modern Cairo. And there Amru laid the foundation of a great Mosque on the site of that which still bears his name.[1]

A.H. 19-20.

Fostat.

Zobeir urged Amru to enforce the right of conquest, and divide the land among his followers. Amru refused; and the Caliph confirmed the judgment. "Leave it," was his wise reply, "in the people's hands, to nurse and fructify." As elsewhere, Omar would not allow the Arabs to become proprietors of a single acre. Even Amru was refused ground whereon to build a mansion for himself. He had a dwelling-place, the Caliph reminded him, at Medina, and that should suffice. So the land of Egypt, left in the hands of its ancestral occupants, became a rich granary for Arabia, just as in bygone times it had been the granary of the Roman empire.

Soil left with the cultivators.

A memorable work, set on foot by Amru after his

"claim beyond dispute to be the true descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and "the enduring witnesses through centuries of persecution for the faith of "Christ" (vol. i. p. 370).

[Thank God that all this has now changed into a brighter prospect since the glorious victory of Khartum. 3rd Ed.]

[1] An interesting history of the Mosque with illustrations appears in the *Asiatic Journal* for October 1890, p. 759. Amru (Amr) is there described, from a tradition of Makrizi, as "a short thick-set man with a large head and "black eyes, and a good-humoured expression." The tradition adds a sermon given by Amru in this Mosque, which of course, like much else that we read about this campaign, is mere fiction.

A.H. 19-20.

Suez Canal. Reopened, 21 A.H. 642 A.D.

return to Fostat, facilitated the transport of corn from Egypt to the Hejaz. It was nothing less than the reopening of the ancient communication between the waters of the Nile in Upper Egypt and those of the Red Sea at Suez.[1] The channel left the eastern branch of the river at Belbeis, then turned to the right, and, striking the salt lakes near Timseh, reached the Red Sea by what is now the lower portion of the Suez Canal. Long disused, the bed was choked with silt; but the obstructions could not have been very formidable, for within a year navigation was restored, and the Caliph, at Yenbo (the port of Medina), witnessed vessels discharge their burdens which had been freighted under the very shadow of the Pyramids. The canal remained navigable for some Eighty years, when, choked with sand, it was again abandoned.

Amru would teach Egyptians to respect the Arabs.

Finding that the Egyptians, used to delicate and luxurious living, looked down upon the Arabs for their frugal fare, Amru, famed for mother-wit, chose a singular expedient to disabuse them. First he had a feast prepared of slaughtered camels, after the Bedouin fashion, and the Egyptians looked on with wonder while the army satisfied their hunger with the rude repast. Next day a sumptuous banquet was set out, with all the dainties of the Egyptian table; here again the warriors fell to with equal zest. On the third day the troops were paraded in battle array, when Amru thus addressed the crowds who flocked to the spectacle:—"The first day's entertainment was to let you "see the simple manner of our life at home; the second "to show that we can enjoy the good things of the con-"quered lands, and yet retain, as ye see this day, our "martial vigour notwithstanding." The Copts retired, saying one to the other, "See ye not that the Arabs "have but to raise their heel upon us, and it is enough." Omar was delighted at his lieutenant's device, and said of him, "Of a truth it is on wisdom and resolve, as well as "upon force, that warfare doth depend."

---

[1] The attempt was first made by Pharaoh Nechos, and subsequently by Darius, who opened communication from Bubastis, on the eastern estuary of the Nile, to the head of the Red Sea. A second canal was made by the Ptolemies at Tel Fakhus, nearer to the Mediterranean. This took the line of lagoons (the modern fresh-water canal) to the Red Sea, and was too shallow to be of much use, excepting in high flood. One of these lines eventually, deepened by Trajan, remained navigable to the end of the Third century of our era. It was the same canal, no doubt, now cleared out and deepened by Amru.

A.H. 19-20.

Fable of maiden sacrifice to Nile.

A curious tale is told of the rising of the Nile. The yearly flood having been long delayed, the Copts, according to custom, sought leave to cast into the river a maiden beautifully attired, or rather, as we may suppose, the effigy of such a one.[1] When referred to, the Caliph inclosed this singular letter in a despatch to Amru:—

> "The Commander of the Faithful to the River Nile, greeting.
>
> "If in times past thou hast risen of thine own will, then stay thy flood; "but if by will of Almighty God, then to Him we pray that thy waters may "rise and overspread the land."

"Cast this letter," wrote the Caliph, "into the stream, and "it is enough." It was done, and the fertilising tide began to rise abundantly.

Alexandria retaken; finally reduced, 25 A.H. 646 A.D.

Amru, with the restless spirit of the faith, soon pushed his conquests westward, established himself in Barca, and reached even to Tripoli. The subject races were taxed in fixed tribute of Berber slaves, thus early sanctioning in that unhappy land, traffic in human flesh and blood. The maritime settlements received little aid from the Byzantine fleets. But, a few years after, in the Caliphate of Othman, a desperate attempt was made to regain possession of Alexandria. The Moslems, busy with their conquests elsewhere, had left the city insufficiently protected. The Greek and other inhabitants, already weary of the Moslem rule, conspired with the Byzantine Court; and a fleet of 300 ships, under command of Manuel, drove out the garrison and took possession of the city. Amru hastened to its rescue. A great battle was fought outside the walls: the Greeks were defeated, and the town subjected to the miseries of a second and longer siege. It

---

[1] The tradition is not given by our early authorities, but may nevertheless be grounded on fact, for Lane tells us it is the custom to cast year by year such a figure into the river, calling it *The Bride of the Nile.*

A.H. 19-20. was at last taken by storm and given up to plunder. To obviate the recurrence of similar mishap, Amru razed the fortifications, and quartered in the vicinity a strong garrison, which twice a year was relieved from Upper Egypt. The Moslem court was transferred to Fostat, and Alexandria ceased to be the capital of Egypt.

CHAPTER XXIII

ADVANCE ON THE SOUTH OF PERSIA. HORMUZAN TAKEN PRISONER

16–20 A.H. 637–641 A.D.

Barrier fixed by Omar eastward.

TURNING once more to the eastern provinces of the Caliphate, we find the cautious policy of Omar still tending to restrain the Moslem arms within the limits of Irac-Araby, or the country bounded by the western slopes of the Persian range. But they were soon, by the force of events, to burst the barrier.

Situation in Lower Irac.

To the north of Medain, the Moslem border was securely defended by Holwan and other strongholds planted along the hilly range. In Lower Irac, Otba had, after repeated encounters, established himself at Bussorah, from whence he held securely the country at the head of the Gulf. But the Persian satraps were still in strength at Ahwaz and Ram Hormuz, within a hundred miles of him.

Governor of Bahrein attacks Persepolis.

Hostilities in this direction were precipitated by a rash and unsuccessful raid upon Persepolis. Ala, who had distinguished himself by crushing the rebellion in Bahrein, saw with jealous eye the conquests in Irac of Sad and Otba. Tempted by the nearness of the Persian shore across the narrow strait, he set on foot an expedition to seize the district lying opposite. This was done, not only without permission, but against the known unwillingness of Omar to trust the treacherous element. Success might have justified the project; but it fell out otherwise. The troops landing on the Persian coast, met for a time with no check in their advance upon Persepolis. But before long they were drawn into a trap. Advancing altogether,

A.H. 16-20.

Meets a check, but is relieved from Bussorah.

they had neglected to secure their base, and were cut off by the enemy from their ships. After a severe engagement, unable to disperse the gathering enemy, and turning as a last resource towards Bussorah, they found the road in that direction barred. Messengers were hurried to Medina, and Omar, incensed with Ala for his foolhardiness, despatched urgent command to Otba to relieve the beleaguered army. A force of 12,000 men set out immediately; and forming, not without difficulty, a junction with Ala, beat back the Persians, and then retired on Bussorah. The troops of Otba gained a great name in this affair, and the special thanks of Omar.

Campaign in Khuzistan, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.

But the retreat, conducted with whatever skill and bravery, put heart into the hostile border. Hormuzan, a Persian satrap, had escaped from Cadesiya to his own province of Ahwaz, on the lower mountain range, at no great distance from Bussorah. He began now to make raids upon the Arab outposts, and Otba resolved to attack him. Reinforcements were obtained from Kufa, and Otba was fortunate enough to gain over a Bedouin tribe, which, though long settled near Ahwaz, was by blood and sympathy allied to the garrison of Bussorah. Thus strengthened, he dislodged the enemy from Ahwaz, and drove him across the Karoon river. A truce was called; and Ahwaz, ceded to the Moslems, was placed by Otba in the hands of his Bedouin allies. After one of his victories, the girdle of the defeated Mirzuban, or Persian noble, was sent as a trophy to the Caliph. The envoy, pressed by Omar, confessed that the Moslems were becoming luxurious in foreign parts;—"The love of this present life," he said, "increaseth upon them, gold and silver dazzling their "sight." Concerned at the unwelcome avowal, Omar summoned Otba, who came leaving a Bedouin chief in charge at Bussorah. The arrangement was highly distasteful to Omar,—"What!" he cried, "hast thou put a man of the Desert over the Companions of the Prophet? That may never be!" So Moghira was placed in charge; and Otba dying on his journey back from pilgrimage, Moghira became Governor in his stead. Thus early do we see the

Moghira succeeds Otba at Bussorah.

A.H. 16–20.

spirit of antagonism rapidly breeding between the Bedouin chiefs and the men of Mecca and Medina.

Hostility of Hormuzan, 18 A.H. 639 A.D.

In the following year, a dispute as to their boundary arose between the Bedouin tribe and Hormuzan; and the latter, dissatisfied with the Moslem general's decision, again raised his hostile standard. He was put to flight by the Moslems, who reduced the rebellious province, and sought permission to follow up the victory by a farther advance. But Omar, withholding permission, bade them rather busy themselves where they were in restoring the irrigation works, and so resuscitate the deserted fields of Khuzistan. Hormuzan fled farther east, and was, for the second time, granted an amnesty.

Ram Hormuz and Tostar captured, 19 A.H. 640 A.D.

Not long after, emissaries from Yezdegird at Merve were found at work stirring the people up to fresh rebellion. The attitude of Hormuzan became once more doubtful; and the Caliph, suspecting serious opposition, ordered a powerful army to assemble from Kufa and Bussorah, of which he gave command to Noman. Hormuzan, with a great Persian following, was pursued by it; again routed at Ram Hormuz, he fled to Tostar, fifty miles north of Ahwaz, a stronghold which, obstinately defended by the Persians, kept the Moslems for several months at bay. In the end, but not without considerable loss, it was stormed, and Hormuzan, with the garrison, surrendered at the discretion of the Caliph, and was accordingly sent to the Court at Medina.

Sus, or Shushan.

Siege was then laid to Sus, the royal Shushan of ancient memory; still a formidable city, it was planted between two rivers, on a verdant plain with snow-clad mountains in the distance. The army succeeded here in drawing over a body of Persian nobles with a large native following; these were at once admitted to confidence, and commands conferred upon them, with the singular honour of a well-portioned place upon the tribal list. Still, it was not till after a protracted siege and conflict that Sus was taken. Omar gave orders for the reverential maintenance of the tomb of Daniel in this the scene of his memorable vision "by the river of Ulai"; and here, to the present

Tomb of Daniel.

A.H. 16-20.

day, the pious care of succeeding generations has preserved his shrine through thirteen centuries of succeeding change.

Jundai-Sabur.

The important city of Jundai-Sabur, with surrounding country, was also reduced by Noman, and an advance threatened on Ispahan. But events were now transpiring in Khorasan, which at length opened the way to an advance upon the heart of Persia, and called that Leader to more stirring work.

Hormuzan spared by Omar.

The deputation which, along with the spoil of Tostar, carried Hormuzan a prisoner to Medina, throws light upon the reasons that weighed with the Caliph to withdraw his long-standing embargo on a forward movement. As the party drew near Medina, they dressed out the captive in his brocaded vestments, to show to the Citizens the fashion of a Persian noble. Wearied with the reception of a deputation from Kufa (for in this way he transacted much of the provincial business), Omar had fallen asleep, whip in hand, on his cushioned carpet in the great Mosque. When the captive Prince entered the precincts of the court, "Where is the Caliph?" he cried, looking round, "and "where his guards and warders?" It was indeed a contrast between the sumptuous palaces of the Chosroes, to which he had been used, and the simple surroundings of the mightier Caliph! Disturbed by the noise, Omar started up, and, divining who the stranger was, exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord, who hath humbled this man and the "like of him!" He made them disrobe the prisoner and clothe him in coarse raiment. Then, still whip in hand, he upbraided Hormuzan, and (Moghira interpreting) bade him justify the repeated breach of his engagements. The captive made as if fain to reply; then gasping, like one faint from thirst, begged for a draught of water. "Give it," said the Caliph, "and let him drink in peace." "Nay," said the captive, trembling, "I fear to drink, lest some one slay me unawares." "Thy life is safe," said Omar, "until thou hast drunk the water up." The words were no sooner spoken than Hormuzan poured the contents upon the ground. "I wanted not the water," he said, "but quarter, and now thou hast given it me." "Liar!" cried Omar angrily, "thy life is forfeit." "But not," interposed the bystanders, "until he drink the water up." "Strange," said Omar, foiled for once, "the fellow hath deceived me, "and yet I cannot spare the life of one who hath slain so "many of the faithful by reiterated treachery. I swear that "thou shalt not gain by thy deceit, unless thou embrace "Islam." Hormuzan, nothing loth, made profession of the faith upon the spot; and thenceforth, taking up his residence at Medina, received a pension of high grade.

Deputation urge removal of ban against advance.

"What is the cause," inquired Omar of the deputation, "that these Persians persistently break faith and rebel "against us? Maybe, ye treat them harshly." "Not so," they answered; "but thou hast forbidden us to enlarge our "boundary; and the King is in their midst to stir them up. "Two Kings can in no wise exist together, until the one "expel the other. It is not our harshness, but their King, "that hath incited them to rise against us after having "made submission. And so it will go on until thou shalt "remove the barrier and leave us to go forward and expel "their King. Not till then will their hopes and machina"tions cease."

Omar begins to see this.

These views were also enforced by Hormuzan. The truth began to dawn on Omar that necessity was laid upon him to withdraw the ban against advance. In self-defence, nothing was left but to crush the Chosroes and take entire possession of his realm.

CHAPTER XXIV

CONQUEST OF PERSIA

21–22 A.H. 642–643 A.D.

Persian campaign forced on Omar.

IT was not long before any lingering doubts of Omar were put an end to. He was compelled at last by the warlike attitude of the Persian court to bid his armies take the field with the avowed object of dealing the Empire a final blow.

Yezdegird gathers a great army, 20 A.H. 641 A.D.

Though forced to fly, Yezdegird may have buoyed himself up with the hope that the Arabs, content with the fertile plain of Mesopotamia, would leave his possessions undisturbed beyond the mountain range. But the capture of Sus the ancient capital of Media, and the advance on Ispahan put an end to any such imagination. Arabian hordes still pressed upon the border; and their irruption into farther Persia was inevitable. The King, having resolved once more to stem the hostile tide, ordered the Governors of provinces to gather their forces together for a vigorous attack. Many of these enjoyed a virtually independent rule; but now their interests were knit together by a common danger. From the shores of the Caspian to the Indian Ocean, from the Oxus to the Persian Gulf, they rallied in vast numbers around the Royal standard on the plain below the snow-capped peak of Demavend.

Force under Noman opposes them.

Tidings of the rising storm as they reached Sad were passed on directly to the Caliph. Each courier brought a fresh alarm. A host of 150,000 was assembled under a general named Firuzan; now encamped at Hamadan, now marching on Holwan, they would soon be close to

A.H. 21–22.

Kufa, at their very doors. The crisis, no doubt, was serious. Any reverse on the mountain border would loosen hold upon the plains below; and Chaldæa, even Kufa and Bussorah might be wrested from them. As on previous occasions of imminent danger, Omar declared his resolve to march in person. Encamped midway between these two Cities, his presence would restore confidence; and while able from thence to direct the movements in front, his reserve would be a defence to them in the rear. But the old arguments again prevailed, and Omar was persuaded to remain behind. Noman was summoned from the campaign in Khuzistan to take the chief command. Leaving strong garrisons behind, troops were pushed forward in two columns from Bussorah and Kufa. The army at Sus, besides furnishing a contingent for the main advance, renewed its attack upon Persepolis, and so prevented the forces in that quarter from joining the Royal standard.

Battle of Nehavend, 21 A.H. 642 A.D.

Arrived at Holwan, Noman sent forward spies, who reported the enemy pitched in great force on the plain bounded by the lofty peaks of Elwand, but the road thus far clear. So they marched forward, and were soon face to face with the Persians on the memorable field of Nehavend. The Moslems were 30,000 strong, one fifth only of the enemy; weak in numbers, but strong in faith, and nerved by the presence of veterans and heroes of former fields. After two days' skirmishing, the Persians retired behind their line of fortification, from whence they were able at pleasure to issue and molest their adversaries. The Moslems at last, wearied by delay, resolved by artifice to draw them out. At Toleiha's instance they fell back, and, on the Persians following, wheeled round and cut them off from their return. A fierce engagement followed, and in it Noman was slain. But the Arabs achieved at last their wonted success. Of the enemy 30,000 were left on the field; the rest fled to an adjoining hill, and there 80,000 more were slain. Of the great army but shreds effected their escape. The fate of Firuzan gave rise to a pious proverb. He fled towards Hamadan, but finding

A.H. 21-22.

Decisive effect of Moslem victory.

the mountain pass choked by a caravan of honey, and losing his way, was overtaken thus and slain. Hence the saying—"*Part of the Lord's host is the honey-bee.*" Hamadan fell into the hands of the victorious army; and the royal treasure and jewels, deposited for safety in the great Fire temple there, were delivered up. The chiefs and people of all western Persia submitted and became tributary. The booty was immense; and amongst it two caskets of rare gems, which Omar at first placed in the treasury at Medina. Next morning, the courier was recalled, Omar having seen a vision of angels who warned him of punishment hereafter if he kept the jewels. "Take "them hence," he said; "sell them, and let the price be "divided amongst the army." They fetched 4,000,000 dirhems.

Rei and other conquests, 22 A.H. 643 A.D.

Omar had now embarked on an enterprise from which there was no returning. The proud Yezdegird refused to yield, and the Caliph no longer scrupled pursuing him to the bitter end. The warlike races south of the Caspian again gathered under Isfandiar, brother of the ill-fated Rustem, for the defence of Rei. The Moslems advanced to meet them; and another great victory placed the City at their mercy. Isfandiar retired to Azerbijan; again defeated, he was taken prisoner; then, despairing of success, he changed sides, and made common cause with the invading army. From Rei, Yezdegird fled to Ispahan; finding no shelter there, he hurried to Kerman, and thence retired to Balkh. At last he took refuge in Merve, whence he sought aid from the Turks, and even from the Emperor of China. The former espoused his cause; and for several years the contest was waged with varying success in the vicinity of Merve. But in the end the Turkish hordes retired, and with them Yezdegird, across the Oxus. The conflict was subsequently renewed, but Yezdegird never recovered his authority; bereft of his treasures and deserted by his followers, who in vain besought him to tender submission, he survived till the reign of Othman, when, as we shall see, he met with an ignoble death.

On the fall of Rei, the Arabs turned their arms against

A.H. 21–22.

Persian empire reduced.

the various Persian provinces. Some of these, though subordinate in name, had been, in point of fact, their own masters; and now, even when the heart had ceased to beat, maintained a dangerous vitality. Six columns, drawn from Kufa and Bussorah, and continually replenished by new Arabian levies thirsting for rapine and renown, invaded as many different regions, each falling under the government of the leader who reduced it. Thus, one after another, Fars, Kerman, Mokran, Sejestan, Khorasan, and Azerbijan, were conquered. But the people would ever and anon rise again in rebellion; and it was long before the invaders could subside into a settled life, or feel secure away from the protection of garrisoned entrenchments. The privileges enjoyed by professors of the faith were so great that the adherents of Zoroastrian worship were not long able to resist the attraction; by degrees the Persian race came over, in name at least, to the dominant creed, and in the end all opposition ceased. The notices of Zoroastrian families, and of Fire temples destroyed in after reigns, show indeed that in many quarters the conversion was slow and partial.[1] But after the fall of the Court, the political and social inducements to bow before Islam were, for the most part, irresistible. The polished Persian formed a new element in Moslem society. Yet, however noble and refined, he held for long a place apart and altogether inferior to that enjoyed by the rude but dominant class of Arabian blood. Individuals or families belonging to the subject peoples could only gain a recognised position by attaching themselves to some Arab chief or clan, as "clients" or adherents; and, though thus dependent, might claim some of the privileges of the ruling faith. But neither here nor elsewhere did they intermarry with the Arabs on equal terms, nor were they, in point of fact, looked upon otherwise

Persians long held a subordinate race.

---

[1] The Zoroastrians were still numerous, especially in the outlying provinces, even under the Abbassides. The social and political inducements to profess Islam,—a profession at first but superficial,—are well brought out in *The Apology of Al Kindy*. See especially the speech of Al Mamun, pp. 29 and 84.

A.H. 21-22.

than as of inferior caste. Thus, though in theory, on becoming Mussulmans, conquered nations might enter the "equal brotherhood" of Islam, they formed not the less an altogether lower estate. The race and language, ancestral dignity, and political privileges, of the Arab line, continued for many generations to be paramount

CHAPTER XXV

THE LATER YEARS OF OMAR'S REIGN. DOMESTIC EVENTS

17–23 A.H. 638–644 A.D.

17–23 A.H. 638-44 A.D. Quiet in Syria, Arabia, and Egypt.

WHILE Moslem arms were thus rapidly reducing the East under the Omar sway, the wave of conquest which had swept over Syria, and broken threateningly on the southern border of Asia Minor, now for the time relaxed into a calm. After the death of Heraclius there was no longer spirit left in the Empire to continue the struggle by either land or sea. Desultory attempts there were at intervals upon the coast, but followed by no lasting success. Muavia was busy meanwhile consolidating the administration of Syria, and, with sagacious foresight, strengthening his hold against the chances of the future. Elsewhere peace prevailed. Amru maintained firm rule in Egypt ; and, waging chronic warfare against the Native tribes and Roman settlements on the coast, gradually extended westward the boundaries of Islam. Arabia, still pouring forth its restless spirits to fight abroad, was tranquil at home.

Omar visits Mecca; enlarges court of Kaaba.

Besides the journeys into Syria already mentioned, Omar quitted his residence at Medina only for the annual Pilgrimage. The Governors of the various provinces used to visit Mecca for the same purpose ; and the Caliph was wont to improve the opportunity for conferring with them as they returned by way of Medina, on matters of provincial interest. Several years before his death, he spent three weeks at Mecca, and enlarged the space around the Kaaba. Dwellings that approached too closely to the

A.H. 17–23.

Holy house were pulled down, and the first step taken to form a grand Square and piazza such as became the place of worship for all mankind. Some owners refused to sell their patrimony; but the houses were demolished nevertheless, and the price in compensation deposited in the treasury. The boundary pillars of the *Haram*, or sacred precincts around the City, were renewed; and convenient halting-places constructed at the pilgrim stations, for custody of which and care of the adjoining springs, the local tribes were held responsible.

Disaster in Red Sea, 19 A.H. 640 A.D.

In the seventh year of Omar's reign volcanic fires burst from a hill in the neighbourhood of Medina. The Caliph gave command to distribute alms amongst the poor, a pious work in which the people joined; "and so the volcano stopped." In the same year a naval expedition was sent across the Red Sea, to check attacks upon the Moslems on the Abyssinian coast. The vessels were wrecked, and the expedition suffered great privation. The disaster led Omar to vow that he would never again permit troops to embark upon an element so treacherous. It was not till some years after his death that the Mussulmans gathered courage to brave the risks of a naval encounter.

Moghira arraigned on charge of adultery, 17 A.H. 638 A.D.

In the Governors appointed to control the turbulent cities of Kufa and Bussorah, Omar was not altogether fortunate. Otba, governor of Bussorah, died, as we have seen, shortly after rescuing the unfortunate expedition to Persepolis. The choice of a successor in Moghira was ill-advised. Of rude and repulsive aspect, he had committed murder in his youth at Tayif, and Islam had not softened his nature or improved his morals. A Harem of fourscore wives and concubines failed to satisfy his vagrant passion. At Bussorah his movements were watched by enemies, who through an intervening window were witness to an intrigue with a Bedouin lady visiting his house. When he came forth to lead the public prayer, they shouted him down as an adulterer; and Omar summoned him to answer the accusation. By any reasonable law of evidence, the crime had been established beyond a doubt;

A.H. 17-23.

but, under the strange conditions promulgated by Mahomet on the misadventure of his favourite wife, there was a flaw in the testimony of Ziad, the fourth witness.[1] The Caliph, with an ill-concealed groan at the miscarriage of justice, ordered the witnesses to be scourged according to the ordinance, and the accused set free. "Strike hard," cried the barefaced Moghira, addressing the unwilling minister of the law;—"strike hard, and comfort my heart thereby!" "Hold thy peace," said Omar; "it wanted but little to convict thee; and then thou shouldst have been stoned to death as an adulterer." The culprit was silenced, but not abashed. He continued to reside in Medina, a crafty courtier at the Caliph's gate.

Abu Musa governor of Bussorah.

As successor, Omar appointed Abu Musa to the government of Bussorah, a man of very different stamp. Small of stature, smooth in face, and of little presence, he had yet distinguished himself at Honein, and had been employed as an envoy by the Prophet. He wanted strength and firmness for the stormy times that were coming, but was wise and sufficiently able to hold the restless Bedouins of Bussorah in check. Belonging to a Bedouin tribe himself, it was perhaps an advantage, in the jealousies now growing up, to be outside the clique of Mecca and Medina citizens. But feeling still the need of such support, he said to Omar as he was leaving: "Thou "must strengthen my hands with a company of the Com-"panions of the Prophet, for verily they are as salt in the "midst of the people"; and his request was granted, for he took nine-and-twenty men of mark along with him. But even Abu Musa was near losing his command, and that in a way which curiously illustrates Omar's government. After a successful campaign against the Kurds, he sent, as usual, a deputation to Medina with report of the victory, and the royal Fifth. Dhabba, a discontented citizen, being

---

[1] The autoptic witness of four persons is necessary for conviction, the penalty being death; but if the evidence fail of full proof, the witnesses instead are scourged (*Life of Mahomet*, p. 293). Conviction therefore is, under ordinary circumstances, practically impossible. Moghira felt beholden to Ziad for his evidence in this matter, as we shall in the sequel see.

A.H. 17-23.

refused a place upon it, set out alone to Medina, and there laid charges against Abu Musa, who was summoned by Omar to clear himself. After some days of confinement, he was brought before the Caliph, face to face with his accuser. The first charge was that a band of youths taken in the expedition were used by him as attendants. "True," said Abu Musa; "they did me good service as guides; therefore I paid their ransom, and now, being free, they serve me." "He speaketh the truth," answered Dhabba, "but what I said was also true." The second was that he held two landed properties. "I do," explained Abu Musa; "one for the subsistence of my family, the other for the sustenance of the people." Dhabba answered as before. The third was that the governor had in his household a girl that fared too sumptuously. Abu Musa was silent. Again, he was charged with making over the seals of office to Ziad; which was admitted by Abu Musa, "because he found the youth to be wise and fit for office." The last charge was that he had given the largess of a thousand dirhems to a poet; and this Abu Musa admitted,—to preserve, as he said, his authority from scurrilous attack. The Caliph was satisfied, and permitted Abu Musa to resume his government, but desired him to send Ziad and the girl to Medina. On their arrival, Omar was so pleased with Ziad, already foreshadowing his administrative talent, that he sent him back with approval of his employment in the affairs of state; but the girl was detained, perhaps because of her undue influence, in confinement at Medina. With Dhabba the Caliph was very angry. Out of malice he had sought to ruin Abu Musa by one-sided allegations. "Truth perverted is no better," said Omar, "than a lie; and a lie leadeth to hell fire."

Accused of malversation, 23 A.H. 643 A.D.

Sad, governor of Kufa deposed, 21 A.H. 642 A.D.

Kufa remained several years under its founder Sad, the conqueror of Chaldæa. At length, in the Ninth year of Omar's reign, a faction sprang up against him. The Bedouin jealousy of the Coreish had already begun to work; and Sad was accused of unfairness in distributing the booty. There was imputed also lack of martial spirit and backwardness in the field, a revival of the slanderous charge at Cadesiya. He was summoned, with his accusers, to Medina; but the main offence proved against him was one of little concern to them. In his public ministrations he had cut short the customary prayers; and Omar, deeming the misdemeanour to be unpardonable, deposed him. To fill a vacancy requiring unusual skill, experience, and power, Omar unwisely appointed Ammâr, who, as a persecuted slave and confessor in the first days of Islam, was second to none in the faith; but a man of no ability, and now advanced in years.[1] The citizens of Kufa were not long in finding out his incapacity; and, at their desire, Omar transferred Abu Musa from Bussorah to rule over them. But it was no easy work for him to curb the factious populace. They took offence at his slave for undue influence in buying fodder before it crossed the bridge; and for so slight a cause, after he had been Governor but for a year, the Caliph sent him back again to Bussorah. Omar was on the point of making another nomination, when the artful Moghira wormed the secret from him; and, dwelling on the burden of a hundred thousand turbulent Citizens, suggested that the candidate in view was not fit to bear it. "But," said Omar, "the "men of Kufa have pressed me to send them neither a "headstrong tyrant, nor a weak and impotent believer." "As for a weak believer," answered Moghira, "his faith "is for himself, his weakness thine; as for a strong tyrant, "his tyranny injureth himself, his strength is for thee." Omar, caught in the snare, was weak enough to confer on Moghira, his former scandal notwithstanding, the government of Kufa. With all his defects, Moghira was, without doubt, the strong man needed for that stiff-necked city; and he held his position during the two remaining years of Omar's reign.

Moghira appointed in his room.

About the same time, Omar appointed another early convert of singular religious merit, Abdallah ibn Masud, who had in early days like Ammâr been a slave at Mecca, to a post at Kufa, for which, however, he was better fitted, —the charge of the Treasury. He had been the body-

Abdallah ibn Masud.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 66.

A.H. 17-23.

servant of the Prophet, who was used to call him "light "in body, but weighty in faith."[1] He was learned in the Coran, and had a "reading" of his own, to which as the best text, he held persistently against all recensions.

Bussorah, additional endowment.

There was still considerable jealousy between Bussorah and its richer rival. The armies of both had contributed towards the conquest of Khuzistan, and had shared accordingly. But Bussorah, with its teeming thousands, was comparatively poor; and Omar, to equalise the benefits of all who had served in the earlier campaigns, assigned to them increased allowances, to be met from the surplus revenues of the territories administered at Kufa.

Provincial officers, civil, military, and religious.

In the more important Governments, the judicial office was discharged by a functionary who held his commission as Cazee immediately from the Caliph. The control of other departments remained with the Governor, who, in virtue of his office, led the daily Prayers and, especially on Friday, added an address which had often an important political bearing. Military and fiscal functions, vested at the first, like other powers, in the Governor's hands, came eventually to be discharged by officers specially appointed to the duty. Teachers of religion were commissioned by the State. From the rapidity with which whole peoples were brought within the scope of Islam, risk arose of error in respect both of creed and ritual, to the vast multitude of "New-moslems," as they were called. To obviate the danger, Omar appointed masters in every country, whose business it should be to instruct the people—men and women separately—in the Coran and its requirements. Early also in his reign, he imposed it, as a legal obligation, that the people, both small and great, should all attend the public services, especially on Friday; and notably that in the month of Fast, the whole body of Moslems should be constant in the assembling of themselves together in the Mosques.

Era of the Hegira, 17 A.H.

To Omar is popularly ascribed, not only the establishment of the Dewan or Exchequer, and Offices of systematic account, but also the regulation of the Arabian

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 58, 294.

A.H. 17–23.

year. He introduced for this purpose the Mahometan era, commencing with the new moon of the first month (Moharram) of the year in which the Prophet fled from Mecca. Hence the Mahometan year was named the *Hegira*, or "Era of the Flight."[1]

Deterioration of social and domestic life.

Of the state of Mahometan society at this period we have not the material for judging closely. Constant employment in the field, no doubt, tended to check the depraving influences which, in times of ease and luxury, relaxed the sanctions and tainted the purity of Bedouin life. But there is ample indication that the relations between the sexes were already deteriorating. The baneful influence of polygamy, divorce, and servile concubinage, was quickened by the multitude of captive women distributed or sold among the soldiers and the community at large. The wife of noble blood held, under the old and chivalrous code of the Bedouins, a position of honour and supremacy in the household, from which she could be ousted by no base-born rival, however fair or fruitful. She was now to be, in the estimation of her husband, but one amongst many. A slave-girl bearing children, became at once, as *Omm Walad*,[2] free; and in point of legitimacy her offspring ranked with the children of the free and noble wife. Beauty and blandishment thus too often outshone birth and breeding, and the favourite of the hour displaced her noble mistress.

Story of Leila.

With the coarse sensualist, revelling like Moghira in a Harem stocked with Greek and Persian bond-maids, this might have been expected. But it was not less the case in many a house of greater refinement and repute. Some lady, ravished, it may have been, from a noble home, and

---

[1] The calendar was already strictly lunar, as announced by the Prophet at he Farewell pilgrimage. But the *era*, and consequent numbering of the years, vas introduced only now. The lunar year is eleven days shorter than the olar, and so loses three years in every century of ours. There is this conenience in the lunar reckoning, that, if the date be given, you can tell the ge of the moon; but also this serious want, that the month is no indication of he season of the year.

[2] *i.e.* "Mother of his child."

A.H. 17–23.

endowed with the charms and graces of a courtly life, would captivate her master, and for the moment rule supreme. The story of Leila affords a sample. That beautiful Ghassanide princess was bought at Duma by Khalid from the common prize. The fame of her charms reached Medina, and kindled a romantic flame in the breast of Abd al Rahman, son of Abu Bekr. The disconsolate lover ceased not singing his Mistress's praises, and his own unhappiness, in verses still preserved. At last he became her master, and she was despatched from the camp to his home. At once he took her to wife. His love was so great that, forsaking all other, he kept only to her, so long as her beauty lasted. She was the queen of his household. After a time she fell sick and began to waste away. The beauty went, and with it the master's love, and her turn came to be forsaken. His comrades said to him: "Why keep her forsaken and "neglected thus? Suffer her to go back to her people "and her home." So he suffered her. Leila's fate was happy compared with that of most. Tired of his toy, the owner would sell her, if still young and beautiful, to be the plaything of another; or if disease or years had fretted her beauty, leave her to eke out the forlorn, weary, hopeless, lot of a household slave.

Use of wine.

Relaxation of manners is significantly marked by frequent notices of drunkenness. There are not wanting instances even of Governors deposed because of it. Omar was rigorous in imposing the legal penalty. He did not shrink from commanding stripes to be inflicted, even on his own son and his boon companions, for the use of wine. At Damascus, the scandal grew to such a height that Abu Obeida had to summon a band of Citizens, with the hero Dhirar at their head, for the offence. Hesitating to enforce the law, he begged of Omar that the penitent offenders might be forgiven. An angry answer came: "Gather an assembly," he wrote in the stern language of his early days, "and bring them forth. Then ask, *Is* "*wine lawful or forbidden?* If they shall say *forbidden*, "lay eighty stripes on each; if *lawful*, behead them "every one." They confessed that it was forbidden, and submitted to the ignominious punishment.

A.H. 17-23.

Influence of concubinage on the family.

Weakness for wine may have been a relic of the days when the poet sang, "Bury me under the roots of the "juicy vine." But there were domestic influences altogether new at work in the vast accession of captive women, Greek, Persian, and Egyptian, to the Moslem harems. The Jews and Christians might retain their ancestral faith, whether as concubines, or married to their masters. With their ancestral faith they, no doubt, retained much also of the habits of their fatherland; and the same may be said both of them and of the Heathen and Parsee slave-girls, even when adopting outwardly the Moslem faith. The countless progeny of these alliances, though ostensibly bred in the creed and practice of Islam, must have inherited much of the mother's life and nationality who nursed and brought them up. The crowded Harem, with its sanction of servile concubinage, was also an evil school for the rising generation. Wealth, luxury, and idleness were under such circumstances provocative of licence and indulgence, which too often degenerated into intemperance and debauchery.

Prevailing laxity of manners.

For, apart from war and faction, Moslem life was idle and inactive. There was little else to relieve its sanctimonious voluptuousness. The hours not spent in the Harem were divided between listless converse in the City clubs, and prayer at Mosque five times a day. Ladies no longer appeared in public excepting as they flitted along shrouded beneath "the veil." The light and grace, the charm and delicacy, hitherto imparted by their presence to Arab society were gone; the softness, brightness, and warmth of nature, so beautifully portrayed in ancient Arab song, were chilled and overcast. Games of chance, and suchlike amusements, were forbidden; even speculation was checked by the ban on interest for money lent. And so, Mussulman life, cut off, beyond the threshold of the Harem, from the ameliorating influences of the gentler sex, began to assume outside the dreary, morose, and cheerless aspect ever since retained. But nature is not to

A.H. 17-23.

be for ever thus pent up; the rebound too often comes; and in casting off its shackles, humanity not seldom bursts likewise through the barriers of the Faith. The gay youth of Islam, cloyed with the dull delights of the sequestered Harem, were tempted thus when abroad to evade the restrictions of their creed, and seek in the cup, in music, games, and dissipation, the excitement which the young and light-hearted will demand. In the greater Cities, intemperance and libertinism were rife. The canker spread, oftentimes the worse because concealed. The more serious classes were scandalised not only by amusements, luxuries, and voluptuous living, inconsistent with their creed, but even with immoralities which cannot here be named. Development of this evil came later on, but tares were already sown even under the strict regime of Omar.[1]

Simplicity of Omar's domestic life.

For the present such excesses prevailed only in foreign parts. At home, the Caliphs, fortified by the hallowed associations of Medina, preserved the simplicity of ancient Arab life. Severe simplicity, indeed, was not incompatible (as in the case of Mahomet himself) with the indulgences of the Harem. But even in this respect, the first three Caliphs, judged by the standard of Islam, were temperate and modest. Omar, they say, had no passion for the sex. Before the Hegira, he contracted marriage with four wives, but two of these, preferring to remain at Mecca, separated from him. At Medina, he married five more, one of whom, however, he divorced. The last marriage was in the eighth year of his reign, when near sixty years of age. Three years previously he had married a granddaughter of the Prophet, under circumstances casting a curious light on his domestic ways. He conceived a liking for Omm Kolthum, the maiden daughter of Abu Bekr, and sister of Ayesha, through whom a betrothal was arranged. But Ayesha found the light-hearted damsel with no desire to wed the aged Caliph. In this dilemma she had recourse to the astute Amru, who readily undertook to break the marriage off. He broached the subject to Omar, who thereupon imagined that Amru wished the maiden for himself. "Nay," said Amru, "that "I do not; but she hath been bred softly in the family of "her father Abu Bekr, and I fear she may ill brook thine "austere manners, and the gravity of thy house." "But," replied Omar, "I have already engaged to marry her; "how can I break it off?" "Leave that to me," said Amru; "thou hast indeed a duty to provide for Abu Bekr's family, but the heart of this maiden is not with thee. Let her alone, and I will show thee a better than she, another Omm Kolthum, even the daughter of Aly and of Fatima." So Omar married this other maiden, and she bore him a son and a daughter.

---

[1] For a description of the shameless demoralisation that prevailed in Damascus and Baghdad, I must refer to the learned and elaborate work of H. von Kremer, *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter dem Chalifen.*

Death of many familiar personages.

Many of those whose names we have been familiar with were now dropping off the scene;—Fatima, the daughter, and Safia, the aunt, of Mahomet, Zeinab one of his wives, and Mary his Coptic bond-maid; Abu Obeida, Khalid, and the Muedzzin Bilâl. Many others who also bore a conspicuous part in the great *rôle* of the Prophet's life, had now passed away, and a new race was springing up in their place.

Abu Sofian and Hind.

Abu Sofian survived till 32 A.H., and died 88 years of age. One eye he lost at the siege of Tayif, and the other at the battle on the Yermuk, so that he had long been blind. He divorced Hind, the mother of Muavia—she who "chewed the liver" of Hamza at the battle of Ohod![1] The reason for the divorce does not appear.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 254.

CHAPTER XXVI

DEATH OF OMAR

23 A.H. 644 A.D.

Omar's last pilgrimage, 23 A.H. Oct. 644 A.D.

IT was now the eleventh year of Omar's Caliphate, and though some sixty years of age, he was full of vigour, and vigilant in the discharge of the vast responsibilities devolving on him. In the last month of the year he journeyed, as was his wont, to Mecca; and taking the widows of Mahomet in his suit, performed with them the full rites of annual Pilgrimage. He had returned but a few days to Medina, when his reign came to a tragic and untimely end.

Abu Lulu, a slave, promises to make him a windmill.

A Persian slave, Abu Lulu, had been brought by Moghira from Irac. Made prisoner in his youth by the Greeks, he had early embraced Christianity; and now, taken by the Moslems, his fate was to endure a second captivity as Moghira's slave. When the crowd of prisoners was marched into Medina from the battle of Nehavend, said to have been Abu Lulu's birthplace, the sight opened springs of tenderness long pent up; and, stroking the heads of the little ones, he exclaimed: "*Verily, Omar hath consumed my bowels!*" He followed the trade of carpenter; and his master shared the profits. Meeting Omar in the market-place, he cried out, "Commander of the Faithful! right me of my wrong, for verily Moghira hath assessed me heavily." "At how much?" asked the Caliph. "At two dirhems a day." "And what is thy trade?" "A carpenter and worker in iron," he said. "It is not much," replied Omar, "for a clever "artificer like thee. I am told that thou couldest design for "me a mill driven by the wind." "It is true." "Come, then," continued the Caliph, "and make me such a mill that shall be driven by the wind." "If spared," said the captive in surly voice, "I will make a mill for thee, the fame whereof shall reach from east even to far west"; and he went on his way. Omar remarked, as he passed, the sullen demeanour of Abu Lulu:—"That slave," he said, "spoke threateningly to me just now."

Omar mortally wounded by him.

Next day, when the people assembled in the Mosque for morning prayer, Abu Lulu mingled with the front rank of the worshippers. Omar entered, and, as customary, took his stand in front of the congregation, with his back towards them. No sooner had he begun the prayer with the words *Allah Akbar*, than Abu Lulu rushed upon him, and with a sharp blade inflicted six wounds in different parts of his body. Then he ran wildly about, killing some and wounding others, and at last stabbed himself to death. Omar, who had fallen to the ground, was borne into his house adjoining the court, but was sufficiently composed to desire that Abd al Rahman should proceed with the service. When it was ended, he summoned him to his bedside, and signified his intention of nominating him to the Caliphate. "Is it obligatory upon me?" inquired Abd al Rahman. "Nay, by the Lord!" said Omar, "thou art free." "That being so," he replied, "I never will accept the burden." "Then stanch my wound," said the dying Caliph (for life was ebbing through a gash below the navel), "and stay me while I commit my trust unto a company that were faithful unto their Prophet, and with whom their Prophet was well pleased." So he named, together with Abd al Rahman, other four,—Aly, Othman, Zobeir, and Sad,—as the chiefest among the Companions, to be Electors of his successor, and called them to his bedside. When they appeared, he proceeded:—"Wait for your brother Talha" (absent at the moment from Medina) "three days; if he arrive, take "him for the sixth; if not, ye are to decide the matter "without him." Then, addressing each in turn, he warned them of the responsibility attaching to the duty now

Appoints Electors to choose successor.

A.H. 23. imposed upon them, and the danger to the one elected of partiality towards his own clan and family. "O Aly, if "the choice fall upon thee, see that thou exalt not the "house of Hashim above their fellows. And thou, Othman, "if thou art elected, or Sad, beware that thou set not "thy kinsmen over the necks of men. Arise, go forth, "deliberate, and then decide. Meanwhile Soheib shall "lead the prayers." When they had departed, he called Abu Talha, a warrior of note, to him, saying:—"Go, "stand before the door, and suffer no man to enter in upon "them." After a pause he spoke solemnly to those around him:—"Tell it to him who shall succeed, as my last "bequest, that he be kind to the Men of the City which "gave to us and to the Faith a home; that he make "much of their virtues, and pass lightly by their faults. "Bid him treat well the Arab tribes; verily they are the "backbone of Islam; the tithe that he taketh from them, "let him give it back unto the same for nourishment of "their poor. And the Jews and Christians, let him faithfully fulfil the covenant of the Prophet with them. O "Lord, I have finished my course. And now to him that "cometh after me I leave the kingdom firmly established "and at peace." Then he lay down quietly and rested for a time.

Desires to be interred by the Prophet.

After a while he bade his son go forth, and see who it was that wounded him. Told that it was Abu Lulu, he exclaimed:—"Praise be to the Lord that it was not one "who had ever bowed down before Him, even once, in "prayer! Now Abdallah, my son, go in unto Ayesha "and ask her leave that I be buried in her chamber by "the side of the Prophet, and by the side of Abu Bekr. "If she refuse, then bury me by the other Moslems, in the "graveyard of Backie.[1] And list thee, Abdallah, if the "Electors disagree" (for he was to have a casting voice) "be thou with the majority; or, if the votes be equal, "choose the side on which is Abd al Rahman. Now let "the people come in." Crowds had assembled at the door; and, permission given, they approached to make

---

[1] For this burying-ground outside the city, see *Life of Mahomet*, p. 193.

A.H. 23.

obeisance. As they passed in and out, Omar asked whether any leading man had joined with Lulu in conspiracy against him. "The Lord forbid!" was the loud response, in horror at the very thought.

His death, 26 xii. 23 A.H. Nov. 644 A.D.

Among the rest, Aly came to inquire; and as he sat by the Caliph's bedside, the son of Abbas too came up. Omar, who dreaded the factious spirit of the latter, said: "O Ibn Abbas, art thou with me in this matter?" He signified assent, whereupon Omar added earnestly: "See "that thou deceive me not, thou and thy fellows. Now, "Abdallah, my son, raise my head from the pillow, then "lay it gently down upon the ground: peradventure "the Lord may in mercy take me thus, this night, for I "fear the horrors of the rising sun." A physician gave him to drink of date-water; but it oozed through the wound unchanged; and so also with a draught of milk. Which when the physician saw, he said: "I perceive that the wound is mortal: make now thy testament, O Commander of the Faithful." "That," said Omar, "have I done already." As he lay, his head resting on the bosom of his son, he recited this couplet:—

> "It would have gone hard with my soul, had I not been a Moslem;
> And fasted and prayed as the Lord hath commanded."

Achievements of his Caliphate.

And so, in a low voice, he kept repeating the name of the Lord and the Moslem creed, until his spirit passed away. It was a few days before the close of the 23rd year of the Hegira. He had reigned for the space of ten years and a half.

Vigorous, wise, and simple.

So died Omar, next to the Prophet the greatest in the kingdom of Islam; for it was all within these ten years that, by his wisdom, patience, and vigour, the dominion was achieved of Syria, Egypt, and Persia. Abu Bekr beat down the Apostate tribes; but at his death the armies of Islam had but just crossed the Syrian frontier. Omar began his reign master only of Arabia. He died the Caliph of an Empire embracing some of the fairest provinces under Byzantine rule, and with Persia to boot. Yet throughout this marvellous fortune he never lost the

A.H. 23. balance of a wise and sober judgment, nor exalted himself above the frugal habit of an Arab chief. "Where is the Caliph?" the visitor would ask, as he looked around the court of the Medina mosque; and all the while the monarch might be sitting in homely guise before him.

Character. Omar's life requires but few lines to sketch. Simplicity and duty were his guiding principles, impartiality and devotion the leading features of his administration. Responsibility so weighed upon him that he was heard to exclaim, "O that my mother had not borne me; would that I had been this stalk of grass instead!" In early life of a fiery and impatient temper, he was known, even in the later days of the Prophet, as the stern advocate of vengeance. Ever ready to unsheathe the sword, it was he that at Bedr advised the prisoners to be all put to death. But age, as well as office, had now mellowed this asperity. His sense of justice was strong. And excepting the treatment of Khalid, whom he pursued with an ungenerous resentment, no act of tyranny or injustice is recorded against him; and even in this matter, his enmity took its rise in Khalid's unscrupulous treatment of a fallen foe. The choice of his captains and governors was free from favouritism, and (Moghira and Ammâr excepted) singularly fortunate. The various tribes and bodies in the empire, representing interests the most diverse, reposed in his integrity implicit confidence, and his strong arm maintained the discipline of law and empire. A certain weakness is discernible in his change of governors at the factious seats of Bussorah and Kufa. Yet even there, the conflicting jealousies of Bedouin and Coreish were kept by him in check, and never dared disturb Islam till he had passed away. The more distinguished of the Companions he kept by him at Medina, partly, no doubt, to strengthen his counsels, and partly (as he would say) from unwillingness to lower their dignity by placing them in office subordinate to himself. Whip in hand, he would perambulate the streets and markets of Medina, ready to punish offenders on the spot; and so the proverb,—"Omar's whip is more terrible than another's sword."

But with all this he was tender-hearted, and numberless acts of kindness are recorded of him, such as relieving the wants of the widow and the fatherless.[1]

First "Commander of the Faithful."

Omar was the first who assumed the title Ameer ul Momenin, or "Commander of the Faithful." "*Caliph* "(Successor) *of the Prophet of the Lord*, was too long and "cumbersome a name," he said, "while the other was "easier, and fitter for common use."

Burial.

According to his desire, Omar was buried side by side with the Prophet and Abu Bekr, in the chamber of Ayesha. Soheib, as presiding over the public Prayers, performed the funeral service, and the five Electors, with the Caliph's son, lowered the body into its last resting-place.

Stormy prospect.

The Moslem annalist may well sigh as, bidding farewell to the strong and single-minded Caliph, he enters on the weak, selfish, and stormy reign of his successor.

---

[1] For example, journeying in Arabia during the famine, he came upon a poor woman and her hungry weeping children seated round a fire, whereon was an empty pot. Omar hastened on to the next village, procured bread and meat, filled the pot, cooked an ample meal, and left the little ones laughing and at play.

CHAPTER XXVII

ELECTION OF OTHMAN

DZUL HIJJ 23 A.H.–MOHARRAM 24 A.H.
NOVEMBER 644 A.D.

The Electors. xii. 23 A.H. Nov. 644 A.D.

WHAT arrangements Omar might have made for a successor, had his end come less suddenly upon him, it is perhaps unnecessary to inquire. But some more definite choice he would, in all probability, have formed. We know that the perils of disunion hung heavily on his mind. The unbridled arrogance of the Arabian tribes at Kufa and Bussorah, flushed with the glory and spoils of war, was already felt to be a growing danger; while family rivalries amongst the Coreish themselves had begun to weaken their hold upon the people. So much is plain, that (Abd al Rahman excepted) Omar saw no one amongst them endowed with sufficient power and influence to hold the reins of government; none, at least, so prominent as to take the acknowledged lead. Again, the mode of nomination or election proper to Islam was yet uncertain. Abu Bekr on his deathbed appointed Omar his successor; but the higher precedent of Mahomet himself, who when laid aside simply named Abu Bekr to lead the prayers, was of doubtful meaning. Had Abu Obeida survived, Omar was known to say that he would have chosen him; but he was gone, and Abd al Rahman would none of the post. Weak and faint from the assassin's dagger, the emergency came upon the dying Caliph unprepared. So, relieving himself of the responsibility, he fell upon the expedient of nominating the chiefest of the Companions, on one or other of whom he knew the choice must fall, to be Electors.

Their position and character.

Omar hoped, no doubt, that the successor thus chosen would have the unequivocal support of those who elected him. But he had not calculated on the frailty of human nature; and selfish ends proved more powerful than loyalty. Abd al Rahman was the only real patriot amongst them. Neither Talha, nor Zobeir, nor Sad, had any special reason to aspire to the Caliphate. Zobeir, indeed, was closely related to the Prophet. Sad, also, was the nephew of Mahomet's mother; but his recall from Kufa had tarnished his fame as conqueror of Medain. Aly, a few years younger, had the strongest claim of kinship, whatever that might be; for he was at once the son of the Prophet's uncle, the widowed husband of the Prophet's daughter Fatima, and the father of his only surviving grandsons. He had hitherto, from inactive temperament, remained passive at the Caliph's court; but, of quick and high intelligence, he had ever held a distinguished place in the counsels of Omar. In the absence of any leading competitor, his claim could now no longer be left out of sight, nor, without want of spirit, fail to be asserted by himself. Othman was his only real rival. Years carried weight with Othman, for he was now close on seventy. Attractive in person and carriage, he early gained the hand of Rockeya, the Prophet's daughter. Shortly after her death, he married her sister Omm Kolthum; and when she, too, passed away, Mahomet used to say he loved Othman so dearly that, if another daughter had yet remained, he would have given her to him. But his character withal had vital defects. Of a close and selfish disposition, his will was soft and yielding. And of all the competitors, Othman probably had the least capacity for dominating the unruly elements now fermenting throughout the Moslem empire.

The conclave.

The Electors, when appointed by Omar, forthwith retired, and fell into loud and hot discussion. Omar, overhearing it, desired that they should wait till his decease. So after the burial, Micdad, a veteran citizen

A.H. 23. appointed by the deceased Caliph to the duty, assembled the Electors in the treasury chamber adjoining Ayesha's house, while Abu Talha with a guard kept watch at the door. Omar had ordered that the choice should not be delayed beyond the third day, so that his successor might be declared by the fourth at latest; and signified the utmost urgency by saying that if the minority then resisted, they should be beheaded on the spot. The Electors, when thus again assembled, pressed hotly each the claim of his own party, and two days passed in unprofitable wrangling. Abd al Rahman spent the night in visiting the leading Citizens, and the chief officers from the Provinces (who, having come for the yearly Pilgrimage, had not yet departed), and in sounding their views. On the third day, Abu Talha warned the Electors that he would allow no further delay, and that decision must be come to by the morning. To bring the matter to an issue, Abd al Rahman offered to forego his own claim, if only the rest would abide by his choice. They all agreed but Aly, who at first was silent, but at last said: "First give me thy "word that thou wilt regard neither kith nor kin, but right "alone and the people's weal." "And I," rejoined Abd al Rahman, "ask thee first to give me thy troth that thou "wilt abide by my choice, and against all dissentients "support it." Aly assented, and thus the matter rested in the hands of Abd al Rahman.

Abd al Rahman umpire.

That night Abd al Rahman, closeted with each of the Electors in turn, did not close his eyes. The contest was narrowed between the houses of Hashim and Omeyya, in the persons of Aly and Othman; and their influence with the electoral body was fairly equal. Zobeir was in favour of Aly; how Sad voted is not certain. Talha had not yet returned. With Aly and Othman, separately, Abd al Rahman was long in secret conference. Each pressed his own claim; but each admitted the claim of the other to be the next in weight. The morning broke upon them thus engaged; and now the nomination must be made.

The courts of the Mosque overflowed with expectant

A.H. 24.

Othman elected.

worshippers assembled for the morning service. Abd al Rahman addressed them thus:—"The people think that "the governors, chiefs, and captains from abroad should, "without further waiting, return to their respective posts. "Wherefore advise me now in this matter." Ammâr, late governor of Kufa, said: "If it be thy desire that there "be no division in the land, then salute Aly Caliph!" and Micdad affirmed the same. "Nay," cried Abu Sarh, "if it be thy desire that there be no division, then salute "Othman!" and Abu Rabia affirmed the same. Ammâr turned in contempt on Abu Sarh; who, repaying scorn with scorn, said: "And pray, Ammâr, how long hast thou been "counsellor to the Moslems? Let the Beni Hashim and "Omeyya speak for themselves." But Ammâr would not be silent; whereupon one cried angrily, "Thou passest "beyond thy bounds, O son of Someyya; who art thou, "thus to counsel the Coreish?"[1] Sad, seeing the strife wax warm, said to Abd al Rahman: "Finish thy work "forthwith, or flames of discord will burst forth." "Silence, ye people!" cried Abd al Rahman. "Be quiet, "or ye will bring evil on yourselves. The determination of "this matter rests with me." So saying, he called Aly to the front;—"Dost thou bind thyself by the covenant of "the Lord, to do all according to the Book of the Lord, "the example of the Prophet, and the precedent of his Successors?" "I hope," responded Aly, "that I should do "so; I will act according to the best of my knowledge and "ability." Then he put the same question to Othman, who answered unconditionally,—"Yea, I will." Whereupon, either dissatisfied with Aly's hesitating answer, or having already decided in his mind against him, Abd al Rahman raised his face toward heaven, and taking Othman by the hand, prayed thus aloud:—"O Lord, "do Thou hearken now and bear me witness. Verily "the burden that is around my neck, the same do I "place round the neck of Othman." So saying, he

1st Moharram 24 A.H. 7 Nov. 644 A.D.

---

[1] To understand the taunts here bandied, it must be remembered that Abu Sarh was the foster-brother of Othman, and bore a bad repute, as we shall see further on; and that Ammâr was son of a bond-maid called Someyya.

A.H. 24. saluted him as Caliph, and the people followed his example.

His inaugural address.

It was the first day of the New year, the 24th of the Hegira. After two or three days spent in receiving the homage of the people, Othman ascended the pulpit, and made a brief and modest speech. "The first attempt," he said, "was always difficult, for he was unused to speak "in public. It would be his duty in the future to address "them, and the Lord would teach him how."

Aly's party discontented.

Though Aly, like the rest, took the oath of allegiance, yet his partisans were much displeased, and he himself upbraided Abd al Rahman bitterly with the desire to keep the supreme power out of the Prophet's house and brotherhood. "Beware," said Abd al Rahman, with prophetic voice,—"take heed lest, speaking thus, thou makest not a "way against thyself, whereof thou shalt repent hereafter." And so Aly passed out with the words of Joseph on his lips; "Surely patience becometh me. The Lord is my "helper against that which ye devise."[1] Shortly after, Talha returned to Medina. Othman acquainted him with what had happened, and as his vote would have ruled the majority, declared that if he dissented, he was prepared even then to resign the Caliphate. But on learning that all the people had agreed, Talha also swore allegiance.

The choice disastrous for Islam.

The choice thus made by Abd al Rahman laid the seeds of sad disaster. It led to dissensions which for years bathed the Moslem world in blood, threatened the existence of the faith, and to this day divide believers in hopeless and embittered schism. But Abd al Rahman could hardly have anticipated the wanton, weak, and wavering policy of Othman, which slowly but surely brought these results about. There is no reason to think that, in discharging his functions as Umpire, he acted otherwise than loyally and, as he thought, for the best.[2]

---

[1] *Sura* xii. 219.

[2] He discharged the invidious task as a loyal and unselfish patriot. Night and day engaged in canvassing the sentiments of the leading chiefs, he did his best to compose the antagonistic claims of the Electors. The immediate cause of his nominating Othman is not easy to find. Abbasside traditions assume it

A.H. 24.

Murder of Hormuzan and affair of Omar's son.

An embarrassing incident followed the accession of Othman. Some one told Obeidallah, son of the deceased Caliph, that Abu Lulu had been seen shortly before in private converse with Hormuzan the Persian prince, and with a Christian slave belonging to Sad; and that when surprised, the three separated, dropping a poniard such as that with which the assassin had wounded Omar. Rashly assuming a conspiracy, the infuriated Obeidallah rushed with drawn sword to avenge his father's death, and slew both the prince and the slave. Sad, incensed at the loss of his slave, seized Obeidallah, still reeking with his victims' blood, and carried him, as the murderer of a believer (for Hormuzan had professed the Moslem faith), before the Caliph. A council was called. There was not a tittle of evidence, or presumption even, of the supposed conspiracy. Aly conceived that, according to the law, Obeidallah must be put to death, as having slain a believer without due cause. Others were shocked at the proposal:—"But "yesterday," they said, "the Commander of the Faithful "lost his life, and to-day thou wilt put his son to death!" Moved by the appeal, Othman assumed the responsibility of naming a money compensation in lieu of blood, and this he paid himself. Some feeling was excited, and people said that the Caliph was already departing from the strict letter of the law. The poet, Ibn Lebid, satirised both the murderer, and the Caliph who had let him off, in stinging verse; but he was silenced. So the matter dropped, and there is no reason to think that the judgment was generally disapproved.

Othman increases stipends.

One of Othman's first acts was to increase the stipends of the chief men all round, by the addition to each of one hundred dirhems. The act, no doubt, was popular, but it gave promise of extravagance in the new administration.

---

o have been the conscientious scruples of Aly in hesitating to swear that he ould follow strictly the precedents of Abu Bekr and of Omar. The Coran nd the precedent of Mahomet he would implicitly obey, but the precedent of e first Caliphs only so far as he agreed with them. In the tenor of the traitions relating how Abd al Rahman first questioned Aly and then Othman, d in their replies, I hardly find sufficient ground for this assumption; and it oks very much of a piece with the Abbasside fabrications of later days.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CALIPHATE OF OTHMAN. GENERAL REVIEW

24–35 A.H. 645–656 A.D.

Causes of Othman's unpopularity.

THE reign of Othman lasted twelve years. It is usual to say that the first six were popular, and the last six the reverse; in other words, that during his later years the tide turned, and, discontent ripening into sedition, the storm burst with gathered fury upon the aged Caliph. This is true to some extent; but in reality the causes of unpopularity were busily at work from the very first. They were twofold, as has been already noticed; first, antagonism between the Arab nation at large and the Coreish; and second, jealousy among the Coreish themselves,—namely, between the house of Hashim and that of Omeyya, to which latter Othman and Muavia belonged.

1. Antagonism between Arab tribes and Coreish.

The Arab soldiery, flushed with the glory and fruits of victory, were spread all over the Empire. In Syria, they were held in check by the powerful hand of Muavia, strengthened by the large body of influential Citizens from Mecca and Medina settled there. But in other lands, conscious of their power, the Arab tribes were rapidly getting the bit between their teeth. Their arrogant and factious spirit had its focus in Kufa and in Bussorah; in both these cities, indeed, it had already under Omar shown itself; for even he had not been able effectually to curb their insolence. The Arabs were impatient of control, partly because the success of Islam was due to their arms; partly because in the brotherhood of the faith, all Believers, specially those of Arab blood, stood on equal ground. The power of the Caliph, indeed, as successor to the Prophet, was absolute, uncontrolled by any constitutional authority whatever. But even he, yielding to popular sentiment, not only took counsel on critical occasions with the leading men around him, but, as a rule, held himself bound by the same, and enjoined the like on his lieutenants. And so it was that in the concessions which he made to the clamour of the citizens of Bussorah and Kufa, Omar had already set a baneful lesson to his successor, and given to those constituencies a foretaste of power which they were not slow to take advantage of. Thus the turbulent spirit grew from day to day,—a spirit of opposition to authority, and impatience of Coreishite rule.

2. Jealousy between houses of Hashim and Omeyya.

The second cause, less threatening to Islam at large, was more insidious, and fraught with greater danger to the Caliphate, and to the person of Othman himself. Had the Coreish rallied loyally around the throne, they might have nipped the Arab faction in the bud. But the weakness of Othman, and the partiality with which he favoured his own relations, stirred the jealousy of the house of Hashim, which began now to vaunt the claims of Aly and the Prophet's family, and to depreciate the Omeyyad branch to which the Caliph belonged. That branch, unfortunately for the Omeyyads, had been the tardiest to recognise the mission of the Prophet; and those on whom Othman now lavished his favour were amongst the earliest and most inveterate opponents of Islam. Every expression uttered by Mahomet during that period of bitter enmity, was now raked up and used to blacken their names, and cast discredit on a Government which promoted them to power and honour. Thus the Coreish were divided; rivalry paralysed their influence, and Othman lost the support which would otherwise have enabled him to crush the machinations of the Arab malcontents. Still worse, Aly and his party lent themselves to the disloyal policy of the Bedouin faction which was fast sapping the foundations of the Caliphate, and which, as Aly should have foreseen, would in the end, if he succeeded to the throne, recoil against himself.

A.H. 24–35.

Factious spirit diverted by military service.

It was not, however, till later on that these influences, though early at work, assumed dangerous prominence. This was in great measure due to the military operations which, busily pursued in all directions throughout the twelve years of Othman's caliphate, served to divert attention from domestic trouble. Expeditions, as we have seen, had been from time to time directed towards the East, and the various provinces brought more or less under tributary subjection. Shortly after the death of Omar, a general rising took place in Persia, and so to restore Moslem supremacy, a series of enterprises were, by command of Othman, set on foot. Ibn Aamir, governor of Bussorah, having first reduced the adjoining province of Fars, inaugurated a great campaign in the north and east. The land was overrun, and the strongholds, after they had been either stormed or had surrendered at discretion, were ordinarily left in the hands of native Princes on condition of a heavy tribute. Nishapur, taken by the treachery of one of the Mirzabans, was assessed at a million, and Merve at a million and a quarter pieces; and so on with the other States. Serukhs surrendered on quarter being given for a hundred lives; but in furnishing the list of names, the Mirzaban forgot his own, and so was beheaded with the rest of the fighting men. A great battle was fought at Khowarizm on the Oxus, and the country as far as Balkh and Takharistan forced to acknowledge the Caliph's suzerainty. Having achieved these splendid victories, in which were taken 40,000 captives, Ibn Aamir set out for Mecca, on a pilgrimage of thanksgiving. The Lieutenants whom he left to prosecute the campaign, restored authority at the point of the sword in the revolted parts of Kerman and Sejestan, and brought under obedience the chiefs as far as Herat, Kabul, and Ghazni.[1] The control must, however, as yet

Campaigns in the East. 31 A.H. 652 A.D.

---

[1] Idolatry long prevailed throughout these parts. In Sejestan, the general seized the shrine of an idol made of gold, and the eyes of rubies. The arms he cut off, and took out the rubies. "Here," said he, as he gave them back to the Prince, "these are thine; this I did only to let thee know that this thing can neither hurt thee nor can it do thee good." It may have

have been but slight and desultory; for long years after, we find these outlying provinces continually rising against Moslem rule, and again for the time asserting independence. Kerman, however, and the nearer parts were held under a more substantial sway; forts were erected, watercourses dug, and the land divided among the conquerors; and so settled rule gradually extended eastward. It was not till the eighth year of Othman's reign that Yezdegird died. There are various accounts of his wanderings in the East after the battle of Nehavend, destitute and helpless; but they all agree in the fact that about this time, taking shelter in a miller's hut, he was there assassinated, and that he was buried with reverence by the Metropolitan of Merve.[1] The knowledge that the line of Nushirvan was now at an end, tended no doubt to the pacification of the East.

A.H. 24-35.

31 A.H. 652 A.D.

Turks and Khizrs, 32 A.H. 653 A.D.

Although upon the whole the progress of the Moslems was steadily forward, there were still reverses, and these not seldom of a serious kind. An arduous campaign was carried on during this reign against the hordes of Turks and Khizrs, to the west of the Caspian Sea. In the year 32 A.H. these gained so signal an advantage in the mountainous passes of Azerbijan, that in the discomfiture which followed, the Arab leaders and a great body of the veterans were slain. To retrieve the disaster, Othman ordered levies from Syria to reinforce the Kufan army. Bad blood bred between the two; the Syrians refused to serve under a General commanding troops from Kufa; and altercation ensued which nearly led to bloodshed. This, adds the historian, was the first symptom of the breach between the Kufans and the men of Syria, which subsequently broke out into prolonged hostility. About the same time, a whole army was lost in deep snow upon the heights of

---

been a Buddhist idol; but of Buddhism as a religion we hear little or nothing in this direction.

[1] We have this in two different traditions. The Bishop summoned the Christians (who would seem to have been at this time a substantial body), and recounting the benefits they had received from the Persian dynasty, made them build a church or shrine over the remains which were buried there.

A.H. 24-35.

Kerman, only two men escaping to tell the tale. There were also some alarming losses in Turkestan. But Arabia continued to cast forth its swarms of fighting tribes in such vast numbers, and the wild fanaticism of the faith still rolled on so rapidly, that such disasters soon disappeared in the swelling tide of conquest.

Syria entirely under Muavia.

Syria had by this time come entirely under Muavia. On the death of his brother Yezid, Omar gave him the government of Damascus; and as the other governors passed away, their districts fell successively into his hands; till at last, early in the reign of Othman, to whom as of the Omeyyad line Muavia was closely related, the entire Province came to be administered by him. Excepting raids of little import, Syria had for some time enjoyed rest, when suddenly in the second year of Othman's caliphate, Muavia was startled by the approach of an army from Asia Minor, which he had not the means to oppose. Help was ordered from the eastern provinces, and 8000 volunteers soon joined the Syrian army. Thus reinforced, the Arabs repulsed the Byzantine attack. Following up the success, they overran Asia Minor, and passing through Armenia, reached Tabaristan, thus forming a junction with their comrades on the eastern shore of the Caspian. Then turning north, they marched as far as Tiflis, and reached even to the Black Sea. Thereafter hostilities with the Greeks were renewed every summer, and eventually, aided by naval expeditions from the ports of Africa, the Syrian generals pushed forward their conquests in the Levant and Asia Minor, strengthened their border, and enlarged their coasts. A few years before the death of Othman, Muavia, accompanied by his Bedouin wife, headed one of these expeditions along the coast to the very precincts of Constantinople; and returning by Amuria, destroyed many fortresses on the way.

Fighting with Greeks, 26 A.H. 647 A.D.

Africa, 25 A.H. 646 A.D.

In Africa, I have already noticed the desperate attack made early in this reign on Alexandria from seaward; the Byzantine forces on that occasion actually regained possession of the City, but were shortly after driven out by Amru; and against the Moslem power in Egypt no

A.H. 24-35.

further attack was for the present made. Farther to the west, however, the Byzantine arms remained long in force; and along the shores washed by the Mediterranean strong Arab columns were still actively engaged against them. Among the chiefs who had joined the Egyptian army was Abdallah Abu Sarh, already noticed as the foster-brother of Othman. He bore no enviable reputation in Islam. Employed by Mahomet to record his revelations, he had proved unfaithful to the trust; and on the capture of Mecca, was by the Prophet proscribed from the general amnesty, and only at the intercession of Othman escaped death. An able administrator, he was appointed by Omar to the government of Upper Egypt, when he advanced on Nubia. But some years after, he fell out with Amru, in whom was vested the supreme control. Each appealed to Othman, who declared Amru to be in fault, and deposed him from the revenue and civil control. Amru objected. "To be over the army," he said, "and not over the revenue, "was like holding the cow's horns while another milked "her." He repaired angrily to Othman, who, after some words of bitter altercation, transferred the whole administration into the hands of Abu Sarh. The act was unfortunate for the Caliph. It threw Amru into the ranks of the disaffected; while the bad repute of Abu Sarh, "the renegade," as they called him, gave point to the charges of partiality and nepotism now rife against Othman.[1]

Amru superseded by Abu Sarh, 26 A.H. 647 A.D.

Abu Sarh, left thus in sole command, carried his arms vigorously along the coast beyond Tripoli and Barca, and even threatened Carthage. Gregory, as its governor, reinforced by the Emperor, advanced against him with an army, we are told, of 120,000 men. Othman, warned of the danger, sent a large contingent to Abu Sarh's help, with which marched a numerous company of "Companions." The field was long and hotly contested; and

Conquests in Africa, 26 A.H. 647 A.D.

---

[1] Abu Sarh narrowly escaped execution at the capture of Mecca (*Life of Mahomet*, p. 397). Party spirit now freely magnified his offence, and he was abused as the person alluded to in *Sura* vi. 94: "Who is more wicked than "he who saith, *I will produce a revelation like unto that which the Lord hath* "*sent down*." See Sale *in loco*.

Abu Sarh, to stimulate his troops, promised the hand of Gregory's daughter, with a large dower, to the warrior who should slay her father. The enemy was at last discomfited with great slaughter, and a citizen of Medina gained the lady for his prize. He carried her off on his camel to Medina; and the martial verses which he sang by the way are still preserved.[1] In this campaign, Othman incurred much odium by granting Abu Sarh a fifth part of the royal Fifth of booty as personal prize. The rest was sent as usual to Medina; and here again Othman is blamed for allowing Merwan his cousin to become the purchaser of it at an altogether inadequate price.

Naval operations forbidden by Omar,

It is, however, as the first commander of a Moslem fleet that Abu Sarh is chiefly famous, in which capacity he added largely to the conquests of Islam; while, on the other hand, his undue elevation aroused keen jealousy contributing anew to the obloquy cast on his Master's name. Muavia had long keenly missed the support of a fleet, and in fact had sought permission from Omar to embark his soldiery in ships. "The isles of the Levant," he wrote, "are close to the Syrian shore; you might "almost hear the barking of the dogs and cackling of the "hens; give me leave to attack them." But Omar dreaded the sea, and wrote to consult Amru, who answered thus:— "The sea is a boundless expanse, whereon great ships look "tiny specks; nought but the heavens above and waters "beneath; when calm, the sailor's heart is broken; when "tempestuous, his senses reel. Trust it little, fear it much. "Man at sea is an insect on a splinter, now engulfed, now "scared to death." On receipt of this alarming account, Omar forbade Muavia to have anything to do with ships; —"The Syrian sea, they tell me, is longer and broader "than the dry land, and is instant with the Lord, night "and day, seeking to swallow it up. How should I trust "my people on its accursed bosom? Remember Ala.[2]

---

[1] The campaign furnishes plentiful material for the romances of the pseudo-Wackidy and later writers. According to some, the maiden leaped from the camel, and being killed escaped thus her unhappy fate.

[2] *Supra*, p. 177.

"Nay, my friend, the safety of my people is dearer to "me than all the treasures of Greece."

But undertaken by Othman.

Nothing, therefore, was attempted by sea in the reign of Omar. But on his death, Muavia reiterated the petition, and Othman at last relaxed the ban, on condition that maritime service should be voluntary. The first fleet equipped against Cyprus, in the 28th year of the Hegira, was commanded by Abu Cays as admiral; it was joined by Abu Sarh with a complement of ships manned by Egyptians, and Arab warriors from Alexandria. Cyprus was taken easily, and a great multitude of captives carried off. The Cypriots agreed to pay the same revenue as they had done to the Emperor; and the Caliph, unable as yet to guarantee their protection, remitted the poll-tax.[1] Of Abu Cays we are told that he headed fifty expeditions by land and by sea, but was killed at last, while engaged in exploring a Grecian seaport.

Cyprus occupied, 28 A.H. 649 A.D.

Naval victory off Alexandria, 31 A.H. 652 A.D.

Three years after the fall of Cyprus, driven now from the harbours of Africa, and seriously threatened in the Levant, the Byzantines gathered a fleet of some 500 vessels, and defied the Arabs. Abu Sarh was appointed to answer the challenge. He manned every available ship in the ports of Egypt and Africa; and his squadron, though inferior in weight and equipment to the Enemy's, was crowded with valiant warriors from the army. The Byzantine fleet came in sight near Alexandria. The wind lulled, and both sides lay for a while at anchor. The night was passed by the Moslems in recitation of the Coran and prayer, while the Greeks kept up the clangour of their bells. In the morning, a fierce engagement took place. The Arab ships grappled with their adversaries, and a hand-to-hand encounter with sword and dagger ensued. The slaughter was great on both sides; but the Greeks,

---

[1] [There is still in Cyprus a shrine called *Khaldat Sultan Takye*, dedicated to Omm Haram, wife of an officer in this expedition. Accompanying her husband on the island, she fell from her mule and died, and so this shrine was dedicated to her. *Asiatic Society's Journal*, January 1896, art. vi. p. 81. 3rd Ed.]

A.H. 24–35.

Obloquy cast on Othman.

unable to withstand the wild onset of the Saracens, broke and dispersed. The Byzantine commander sailed away to Syracuse, where the people, infuriated at the defeat, despatched him in his bath.[1]

This splendid victory notwithstanding, discontent against Othman now for the first time found free and dangerous expression among the leading Companions in the fleet. They murmured thus against the Caliph;—" Othman hath changed the ordinances of his predecessors, " he hath made Admiral a man whom the Prophet would " have put to death; and suchlike men also hath he put " in chief command at Kufa, Bussorah, and elsewhere." The clamour reaching the ears of Abu Sarh, he declared that none of the malcontents should fight in his line of battle. Excluded thus, they were the more incensed. Spite of the threats of Abu Sarh, the inflammatory language spread, and men began to speak openly and unadvisedly against Othman.

Outlook darkens.

The clouds were louring, and the horizon of the Caliph darkened all around.

---

[1] According to Theophanes, it was Constans II, who so perished, but at a later date. See Gibbon, chap. xlviii.

CHAPTER XXIX

DOMESTIC EVENTS DURING THE LATTER DAYS OF OTHMAN. HIS GROWING UNPOPULARITY

30–34 A.H. 651–655 A.D.

Discontent at Kufa and Bussorah.

KUFA and Bussorah at this period exercised an influence on the destinies of Islam hardly less potent than that of Medina itself. The turbulent and factious atmosphere of these cities became rapidly charged with a spirit of disloyalty and rebellion, aggravated by the weak and unwise change of their Governors.

Sad reinstated at Kufa, 34 A.H. 645 A.D.

Moghira did not long enjoy the command at Kufa. He was removed by Othman, who, to fill the vacancy, in obedience (some say) to the dying wish of Omar, reinstated Sad in his former office. The issue again was unsuccessful. To provide for his luxurious living, Sad took an advance from Ibn Masud, chancellor of the treasury, who, by and by, became importunate for repayment. A heated altercation ensued, and Sad swore angrily at Ibn Masud. The factious city ranged itself, part with the great warrior, and part with the quondam slave and attendant on the Prophet. The quarrel reached the ears of Othman, who, much displeased, recalled Sad before he had been a year in office. As successor, the Caliph appointed Welid ibn Ocba, a brave warrior, but suspected of intemperance, and withal a uterine brother of his own. The choice was all the more unfortunate, because Welid was son of that Ocba who, when taken prisoner at the battle of Bedr and about to be put to death, exclaimed in the bitterness of his soul, "Who will care for my little children?" and was answered by the Prophet, "Hell-

Superseded by Welid ibn Ocba,

A.H. 30-34.

fire!"[1] The words were not forgotten, and faction was careful now to turn them to account. Nevertheless, Welid was popular; and as he commanded successive campaigns in the East with gallantry and vigour, he managed for a time to divert the restless spirits from discontent at home. But in the end, the unruly populace was too strong for him. A murder took place, and sentence of death was executed at the City gate against the culprits. Their relatives resented the act of justice, and watched for ground of accusation against the Governor, whose habits gave them ready opportunity. Charges of intemperance were repeatedly dismissed by Othman, for want of legal proof. At last his enemies succeeded in detaching from his hand the signet ring of office while he slept from the effects of a debauch, and carried it off in triumph to Medina. But still worse, it was established that Welid had conducted the morning Prayers in such a state that, having come to the proper end of the service, he went on, without stopping, to commence another. The scandal was great; and the majesty of Islam must be vindicated. Welid was recalled to Medina, scourged according to law, and deposed.

Who is deposed for inebriety.

Abu Musa deposed at Bussorah, 29 A.H. 650 A.D.

At Bussorah, too, things were going from bad to worse. Abu Musa had now been many years Governor, when the restless citizens became impatient of his rule. He had been preaching to the pampered soldiery the virtue of enduring hardness, and going forth on foot to war. When the next expedition was ready, they watched to see whether he would himself set the example. As his ample baggage issued forth, winding from the castle on a long string of mules, they set upon him, crying, "Give us of "these beasts to ride upon, and walk thou on foot, a "pattern of the hardness thou preachest unto us." Then they repaired to Medina, and complained that he had drained the land of its wealth, pampered the Coreish, and tyrannised over the Arab tribes. Instead of checking their petulance with promptitude, Othman gave it new life by deposing Abu Musa, and appointing a certain obscure

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 223.

A.H. 30-34.

citizen whom they desired, to be their Governor. Found unequal to the post, this man was deposed, and a youthful cousin of the Caliph, Ibn Aamir, promoted in his room. When tidings of his nomination reached Bussorah, Abu Musa said: "Now ye shall have a tax-gatherer to your "hearts' content, rich in cousins, aunts, and uncles, who "will flood you with his harpies!" And so it turned out; for he soon filled the local offices and the commands in Persia with creatures of his own. In other respects, however, he proved an able ruler; his signal victories in the East have been already noticed, and in the struggle now close at hand he took a leading part.

Said, Governor of Kufa, 30 A.H. 651 A.D.

The government of Kufa, vacated by the deposition of Welid, was conferred by Othman, together with that of Mesopotamia, upon another young and untried kinsman, Said ibn al Aas. His father was killed fighting against the Prophet at Bedr; and the boy, thus left an orphan, had been brought up by Omar, who eventually sent him to the wars in Syria. Receiving a good account of his breeding and prowess, Omar summoned him to his court, and gave him two Arab maidens to wife.[1] This youth, now promoted to the most critical post in the empire, was not only without experience in the art of governing, but, vainly inflated with the pretensions of the Coreish, made no account of the powerful Bedouin faction. Accustomed in Syria to the strong discipline of Muavia, he wrote to Othman, on reaching Kufa, that licence reigned in the city, that noble birth passed for nothing, and that the Bedouins were altogether out of hand. His first address as Governor was a blustering harangue, in which he glibly talked of crushing the sedition and arrogance of the men of Kufa with a rod of iron. Countenanced in his overbearing course by the Caliph, he fomented discontent by invidious advancement of the Coreishite nobility, and by treating with contumely the great body of the Citizens. "One Coreishite succeedeth another as our governor,"

Discontent gains ground at Kufa.

---

[1] He was nephew to the Khalid who opened so ingloriously the Syrian campaign. Not satisfied with this pair of wives, he had a numerous harem, and left twenty sons and as many daughters.

A.H. 30-34. they said;—"the last no better than the first. It is but out of the frying-pan into the fire." The under-current of faction daily gained strength and volume. But the vigorous campaigns of Said in northern Persia, for he was an active soldier, served for a time to occupy men's minds, and to stay the open exhibition of a rebellious spirit.

Recension of Coran, 30 A.H. 651 A.D. Meanwhile other causes were at work—some apparently insignificant in themselves, but turned adroitly to account by the enemies of Othman. First was the recension of the Coran. The Moslem armies spread over such vast areas and, as well as the converted Peoples, were so widely separated one from another, that differences were arising in the recitation of the sacred text, as it had been settled in the previous reign. Bussorah followed the reading of Abu Musa; Kufa was guided by the authority of Ibn Masud; and the text of Hims differed from that in use even at Damascus. Hodzeifa, during his long campaign in Persia and Azerbijan, having witnessed the variations in different provinces, returned to Kufa gravely impressed with the urgent need of revision. Ibn Masud was highly incensed with the slight thus put upon the authority of his text. But Hodzeifa, supported by the Governor, urged Othman to restore the unity of the divine word, "before that "believers begin to differ in their scripture, even as the "Jews and Christians."[1] The Caliph, advised by the leading Companions at Medina, called for copies of the manuscripts in use throughout the Empire. He then appointed a syndicate of experts from amongst the Coreish, to collate these with the sacred originals still in the keeping of Haphsa. Under their supervision the variations were reconciled, and an authoritative exemplar written out, of which duplicates were deposited at Mecca, Medina, Kufa and Damascus. Copies were multiplied over the empire; former manuscripts called in and committed to the flames; and the standard text brought into

---

[1] [Referring apparently (not to the originals, but) to the translations of the Bible in the various languages of the countries into which Christianity spread. The Coran was held too sacred to be translated, and was only (as still) read in its original Arabic, whatever the language of the people. 3rd Ed.]

A.H. 30–34.

exclusive use. The action of Othman was received at the moment, as it deserved, with general consent, excepting at Kufa. There Ibn Masud, who prided himself on his faultless recitation of the oracle, pure as it fell from the Prophet's lips, was much displeased; and the charge of sacrilege in having burned copies of the divine Word, was readily seized on by the factious Citizens. By and by, the cry was spread abroad; and, taken up with avidity by the enemies of Othman, we find it ages afterwards still eagerly urged by the partisans of the Abbasside dynasty as an unpardonable offence committed by the ungodly Caliph. The accusation thus trumped up was really without foundation. Indeed, it was scouted by Aly himself. When, several years after, as Caliph, he found the citizens of Kufa still blaming his ill-starred predecessor for the act;—"Silence!" he cried; "Othman acted with the advice of the leading "men amongst us; and had I been ruler at the time, I "should myself have done the same."[1]

Many Coreish migrate to Irac.

A great body of the nobility from Mecca and Medina about this time transferred their residence to Kufa and Bussorah. These had no right to share in the endowments of Irac, the special privileges of which, in virtue of conquest, were reserved for the original settlers. They were allowed, however, now to do so on condition that they surrendered their properties in the Hejaz. The concession afforded fresh ground for discontent at the extravagant pretensions of the Coreish.

Abu Dzarr Ghifary.

The story of Abu Dzarr is singularly illustrative of the times, and his treatment formed one of the grounds of complaint against the Caliph. He was an early convert to the faith; and is said even to have anticipated Mahomet in some of the observances of Islam. An ascetic in habit, he inveighed against the riches and indulgences of the day as altogether alien from the faith, and as evils which,

---

[1] On this recension, see Excursus on the "Sources for the Biography of Mahomet," in the *Life of Mahomet*. The manner in which the Abbasside faction perverted the facts and turned the charge to malignant purpose against the Omeyyad house, is well illustrated in the *Apology of Al Kindy*, pp. 25 *et seq*. The charge against Hajjâj is equally groundless.—*Ibid*. p. xi.

A.H. 30-34.

Abu Dzarr Ghifary.

rushing in like a flood, were now demoralising the people. Gorgeous palaces, crowds of slaves, horses and camels, flocks and herds, costly garments, sumptuous fare, and splendid equipage, were the fashion, not only in Syria and Irac, but even now within the Holy cities.[1] The protest of Abu Dzarr was the natural recoil of a strict and fervid believer from the graceless and licentious luxury of the day: but it was seized by the discontented classes as a weapon against the Government. Visiting Syria, the ascetic, whose spirit was stirred at the pomps and vanities around him, preached repentance. "This gold and silver "of yours," he cried, "shall one day be heated red-hot in "the fire of hell; and therewith shall ye be seared in your "foreheads, sides, and backs, ye ungodly spendthrifts![2] "Wherefore, spend now the same in alms, leaving yourselves enough but for your daily bread; else woe be "unto you in that day!" Crowds flocked round him at Damascus, some trembling under his rebuke; others rejoicing at the contempt poured on the rich and noble; while the people at large were dazzled by the vision of sharing in the treasures of the classes thus denounced. Uneasy at the disturbing effect of these diatribes, Muavia resolved to test the spirit of the preacher. He sent him a purse of 1000 pieces, and in the morning, affecting to have made a mistake, demanded its return; but during the night Abu Dzarr had distributed the whole in charity. On this, Muavia, convinced of his sincerity, and apprehensive of the spread of his socialistic doctrines, despatched the preacher to Medina, telling Othman that he was an honest but misguided enthusiast. Before the Caliph, Abu Dzarr persisted in fearlessly denouncing the great and wealthy, and urged that they should be forced to disgorge their riches. Othman condescended to reason with him. "When once men have fulfilled their obligations," he asked, "what power remaineth with me to compel any "further sacrifice?" and he turned to Kab, a learned Jewish convert, to confirm what he had said. "Out upon "thee, son of a Jew! What have I to do with thee?" cried Abu Dzarr, smiting Kab violently on the stomach. Argument being thus of no further use, Othman banished the preacher to Rabadza in the desert, where two years after he died in penury. Finding the end approach, the hermit desired his daughter to slay a kid, and have it ready for a party of travellers who, he said, would shortly pass that way to Mecca; then, making her turn his face toward the Kaaba, he quietly breathed his last. Soon after, the expected party came up, and amongst them Ibn Masud from Kufa, who, weeping over the departed saint, bewailed his fate, and buried him on the spot, which became one of holy memory. The death of Ibn Masud himself, a few days after, added to the pathos of the incident. The plaintive tale was soon in everyone's mouth; and the banishment of the famous preacher of righteousness was made much of by the enemies of the Caliph. The necessity for it was forgotten, but the obloquy remained.[1]

---

[1] Masudy dwells on this as one of the causes of demoralisation and disloyalty now setting in so rapidly, and he gives some remarkable instances. *Zobeir* had 1000 slaves, male and female, and 1000 horses. At all the great cities he had palaces, and the one at Bussorah was still to be seen in the fourth century A.H. His landed estate in Irac was rated at 1000 golden pieces a day. *Abd al Rahman* had 1000 camels, 10,000 sheep, and left property valued at four hundred thousand dinars. *Zeid* left gold and silver in great ingots, and had land valued at 10,000 dinars. The Coreishite nobles built themselves grand palaces in Mecca and Medina and their environs. Othman himself had a splendid palace at Medina, with marble pillars, walls of costly stucco, grand gates and gardens; he also amassed vast treasures.

[2] *Sura* ix. 36; originally applied to Christian priests and monks.—*Life of Mahomet*, p. 440.

Obloquy on his banishment, 30 A.H. 651 A.D.

---

[1] Attempts are made by Abbasside tradition to show that Abu Dzarr was driven into opposition by the tyranny of Muavia's rule, and by divers ungodly practices permitted by Othman at Medina. But Ibn al Athir justly doubts this, and distinctly says that his preaching tended to excite the poor against the rich. Abu Dzarr's doctrines were based on the equality of believers; and the danger lay in their popularity with the Socialists who decried the pretensions of the Coreish. Before Muavia, he reasoned thus: "*Riches*, ye say, *belong unto the Lord*; and thereby ye frustrate the people's "right therein; for the Lord hath given them to His people." "Out upon "thee!" replied Muavia; "what is this but a quibble of words? Are we "not all of us the Lord's people, and the riches belong unto us all?" Tradition dwells on the want and wretchedness of Abu Dzarr's life at Rabadza, to add point to Othman's unkind treatment. His own tribe are said to have resented his ill-treatment by joining the rebellion.

A.H. 30-34.

Amusements at Medina put down.

When himself minded to assume the office of censor and rebuke the ungodliness of the day, the unfortunate Caliph fared no better. The laxity of Syria had reached even to the sacred precincts of the Hejaz; and Othman, on attempting to check the games and other practices held to be inconsistent with the profession of Islam, incurred resentment, especially from the gay youth whose amusements he thwarted. Gambling and wagering, indeed, were put down with the approval of the stricter classes of society; but there were not wanting many who, displeased with the Caliph's interference, joined in the cry of his detractors.

Court of the Kaaba, enlarged, 26 A.H. 647 A.D.

The enlargement of the grand square of the Kaaba, commenced by Omar, was carried on by Othman while he visited Mecca on pilgrimage. And here, too, the ill-fated Caliph met with opposition. The owners of the demolished houses refused to accept the compensation offered, and raised a great outcry. The Caliph put them into prison, for, said he, "My predecessor did the same, and ye made no outcry against him." But what the firm arm of Omar could do, and none stir hand or foot against him, was a different thing for the weak and unpopular Othman to attempt. He was more successful with the Mosque at Medina, originally built by Mahomet, and hallowed by the mortal remains of the Prophet and his two successors. This was now enlarged and beautified. The supports, at first the trunks of date-trees, were removed, and the roof made to rest on pillars of hewn stone. The walls, too, were built up with masonry, richly carved and inlaid with rare and precious stones. It was a pious work, and none objected.

And Mosque of Medina, 32 A.H. 653 A.D.

Changes in pilgrim ceremonial, 32 A.H. 653 A.D.

Yet another cause of murmuring arose from certain changes made by Othman in the ceremonial of the annual Pilgrimage, which, though in themselves trivial and unmeaning, excited strong disapprobation at the Caliph's court. He pitched tents for shelter during the few days spent for sacrifice at Mina, a thing never done before; and, to the prayers heretofore recited there and on Mount Arafat, he added new ones, with two more series of prostrations. The ritual, as established by the Prophet himself, had been scrupulously followed by his two successors, and a superstitious reverence attached even to its minutest detail. When expostulated with on the unhallowed innovation, Othman gave no reasonable answer, but simply said it was his will to do so. Disregard of the sacred example of the Founder of the faith offended many, and raised a cry among the Companions unfavourable to Othman.

Increasing unpopularity.

Again, beyond the immediate circle of his kinsfolk, Othman made no personal friends. Narrow, selfish, indiscreet and obstinate,—more and more so, indeed, with advancing years,—he alienated those who would otherwise have stood loyally by him, and made many enemies who pursued him with relentless hatred. Mohammed son of Abu Bekr, for example, and Abu Hodzeifa, were among those embittered against him at the naval victory of Alexandria. And yet no very special cause can be assigned for their enmity. The first is said to have been actuated by "passion and ambition." The other, nearly related to Othman, and as an orphan kindly brought up by him, was now offended at being passed over for office and command. Both joined the rebellion which shortly broke out in Egypt, and were amongst the most dangerous of the Caliph's enemies. Nor was it otherwise with the people at large. A factious spirit set in against the unfortunate monarch. The leaven fermented all around; and every man who had a grievance, real or supposed, hastened to swell the hostile cry.

Loss of the Prophet's signet-ring, 29 A.H. 650 A.D.

To crown the Caliph's ill-fortune, in the 7th year, he lost the signet-ring of silver which, engraven for the Prophet, had been worn and used officially both by him and his successors. It was a favourite and meritorious occupation of Othman to deepen the old wells, and to sink new ones, in the neighbourhood of Medina. He was thus engaged when directing the labourers with his pointed finger, the ring slipped and fell into a well. Every effort was made to recover the priceless relic. The well was emptied, the mud cleared out, and a great reward offered;

A.H. 30-34.

but no trace of the ring appeared. Othman grieved over the loss. The omen weighed heavily on his mind; and it was some time before he consented to supply the lost signet by another of like fashion.

Othman marries Naila, 28 A.H. 649 A.D.

Besides the two daughters of the Prophet, both of whom died before their father, Othman had other wives. Three still survived when, in the 5th year of his Caliphate, being then above seventy years of age, he took Naila to wife. Of her previous history we know little more than that once a Christian, she had embraced Islam. She bore him a daughter; and through all his trials clung faithfully by her ancient lord, to the bitter end. The days were coming when he needed such a helper by his side.

CHAPTER XXX

DANGEROUS FACTION AT KUFA. GROWING DISSATISFACTION

33–34 A.H. 654–655 A.D.

Seditious elements at work.

TOWARDS the close of Othman's reign, the hidden ferment, which (Syria perhaps excepted) had long been everywhere at work, began to make its appearance on the surface. The Arab tribes at large were displeased at the pretensions of the Coreish. The Coreish themselves were divided and ill at ease, the greater part being jealous of the Omeyyad house and the Caliph's favourites. And temptation to revolt was fostered by the weakness and vacillation of Othman himself.

Ibn Sauda preaches sedition in Egypt, 32 A.H. 653 A.D.

Ibn Aamir had been now three years governor of Bussorah, when Ibn Saba (or, as he is commonly called, Ibn Sauda), a Jew from the south of Arabia, appeared there, and professed the desire to embrace Islam. It soon appeared that he was steeped in disaffection towards the existing government,—a firebrand of sedition; as such he was expelled successively from Bussorah, Kufa, and Syria, but not before he had given a dangerous impulse to the already discontented classes there. At last, he found a safe retreat in Egypt, where he became the setter forth of strange and startling doctrines. Mahomet was to come again, even as the Messiah was. Meanwhile Aly was his legate.[1] Othman was a usurper, and his Governors a set of godless tyrants. Impiety and wrong were rampant

---

[1] What led Ibn Sauda to entertain transcendental ideas of Aly does not appear; and indeed the notices of an "Alyite sect" at this period, sound somewhat anticipatory and unreal.

A.H. 33-34. everywhere; truth and justice could be restored no otherwise than by the overthrow of this wicked dynasty. Such was the preaching which daily gained ground in Egypt; by busy correspondence it was spread all over the Empire, and startled the minds of men already foreboding evil from the sensible heavings of a slumbering volcano.

Emeute at Kufa, 33 A.H. 654 A.D. The outbreak of turbulence was for the moment repressed at Bussorah by Ibn Aamir; but at Kufa, Said had neither power nor tact to quell the factious elements around. At his first public service he had offended even his own party by ostentatiously washing the pulpit steps before ascending a spot pretended to have been made unclean by his drunken predecessor. He was foolish enough not only to foster the arrogant assumptions of the Coreish, but to contemn the claims of the Arab soldiery, to whose swords they owed the conquest of the land. He called the beautiful vale of Chaldæa *the Garden of the Coreish*—"as if forsooth," cried the offended Arabs, "without *our* strong arm and lances, they ever could have "won it." Disaffection, stimulated by the demagogue Ashtar and a knot of factious citizens, culminated at last in an outbreak. As the Governor and a company of the people, according to custom, sat in free and equal converse, the topic turned on the bravery of Talha, who had shielded the Prophet in the day of battle. "Ah!" exclaimed Said, "*he* is a warrior, if ye choose, a real gem amongst your "Bedouin counterfeits. A few more like him, and we "should dwell at ease." The assembly was still nettled at this speech, when a youth incautiously gave expression to the wish, how pleasant it would be if the Governor possessed a certain property which lay invitingly by the river bank near Kufa. "What!" shouted the company, "out of *our* good lands!" And with a torrent of abuse, they leaped upon the lad and his father, and went near to killing both.

Ring-leaders exiled to Syria. To awe the malcontents, emboldened by this outrage, ten of the ringleaders, with Ashtar (of whom more hereafter) at their head, were sent in exile to Syria, where it

A.H. 33-34.

was hoped that the powerful rule of Muavia and loyal example of the Syrians might inspire them with better feelings. Muavia quartered the exiles in a church; and morning and evening, as he passed by, rated them on their folly in setting up the crude claims of the Bedouins against the indefeasible rights of the Coreish. Subdued by several weeks of such treatment, they were sent on to Hims, where the Governor subjected them for a month to like indignities. Whenever he rode forth, he showered invectives on them as traitors working to undermine the empire. Their spirit at last was broken, and they were released; but, ashamed to return to Kufa, they remained in Syria, excepting Ashtar, who made his way secretly to Medina.

Said expelled from Kufa, 34 A.H. 655 A.D.,

Months passed, and things did not mend at Kufa. Most of the leading men, whose influence could have kept the populace in check, were away on military command in Persia; and the malcontents, in treasonable correspondence with the Egyptian faction, gained head daily. In an unlucky moment, Said planned a visit to Medina, there to lay his troubles before the Caliph. No sooner had he gone than the conspirators came to the front, and recalled the exiles from Syria. Ashtar, too, was soon upon the scene. Taking his stand at the door of the Mosque, he stirred up the people against Said. "He had himself just left that despot," he said, "at "Medina, plotting their ruin, counselling the Caliph to "cut down their stipends, even the women's; and calling "the broad fields which they had conquered *The Garden of* "*the Coreish.*" The deputy of Said, with the better class of the inhabitants, sought in vain to still the rising storm. He enjoined patience. "Patience!" cried the warrior Cacaa, in scorn; "ye might as well roll back the great "river when in flood, as quell the people's uproar till they "have the thing they want." Yezid, brother of one of the exiles, then raised a standard, and called upon the enemies of the tyrant, who was then on his way back, to bar his entry into Kufa. So they marched out as far as Cadesia, and sent forward to tell Said that "they did not need him any more." Little anticipating such reception, Said

A.H. 33–34.

remonstrated with them. "It had sufficed," he said, "to "have sent a delegate with your complaint to the Caliph; "but now ye come forth a thousand strong against a "single man!" They were deaf to his expostulations. His servant, endeavouring to push on, was slain by Ashtar; and Said himself fled back to Medina, where he found Othman terrified by tidings of the outbreak, and prepared to yield whatever the insurgents might demand. At their desire he appointed Abu Musa, late Governor of Bussorah, in place of Said. To welcome him the officers in command of garrisons came from all quarters into Kufa; and Abu Musa received them in the crowded Mosque. He first exacted from the inhabitants a pledge of loyalty to the Caliph, and then installed himself by leading the prayers of the great assembly.

And Abu Musa appointed.

Othman's fatal mistake.

If, instead of thus giving way, Othman had inflicted on the ringleaders of Kufa condign punishment, he might haply have weathered the storm. It is true that thus he would in all likelihood have precipitated rebellion, not only in that turbulent City, but in Bussorah and Egypt also. Yet, sooner or later, that was unavoidable; and in the struggle he would now have had a strong support. For here the contention was between the Coreish with all the nobility of Islam on the one hand, and the Arab tribes and city rabble on the other; and in this question the great leaders would to a man have rallied round the throne. By his pitiable weakness in yielding to the insurgents, Othman not only courted contempt, but lost the opportunity of placing the great controversy about to convulse the Moslem world upon its proper issue. It fell, instead, to the level of a quarrel obscured by personal interests, and embittered by charges of tyranny and nepotism against himself. The crisis was now inevitable. Men saw that Othman lacked the wisdom and strength to meet it, and each looked to his own concern. Seditious letters circulated freely everywhere; and the claims even began to be canvassed of candidates to succeed Othman, who, it was foreseen, could not long hold the reins of empire in his feeble grasp.

A.H. 33-34.

Aly expostulates with Othman.

Thus, even at Medina, sedition spread, and from thence messages reached the provinces far and near that the sword would soon be needed at home, rather than in foreign parts. So general was the contagion that besides his immediate kindred, but two or three men are named, as still faithful to the throne. Moved by the leading Citizens, Aly repaired to Othman and said:—"The people "bid me expostulate with thee. Yet what can I say to "thee, who art the son-in-law of the Prophet, as thou "wast his bosom friend? The way lieth plain before "thee; but thine eyes are blinded that thou canst not see. "Blood once shed, will not cease to flow until the Judgment day. Right blotted out, treason will rage like "foaming waves of the sea." Othman complained, and not without reason, of the unfriendly attitude of Aly himself. "For my own part," he said, "I have done my best; "and as for the men ye blame me for, did not Omar himself appoint Moghira to Kufa; and if Ibn Aamir be my "kinsman, is he the worse for that?" "No," replied Aly; "but Omar kept his lieutenants in order, and when they "did wrong he punished them; whereas thou treatest "them softly, because they are thy kinsmen." "And "Muavia, too," continued the Caliph;—"it was Omar "who appointed him to Syria." "Yes," answered Aly; "yet I swear that even Omar's slaves did not stand so "much in awe of him, as did Muavia. And now he doth "whatever he pleaseth, saying, *It is Othman*. And thou, "knowing it all, leavest him alone!" So saying, Aly turned and went his way.

Who appeals to the people.

As Aly's message professed to come from the people, Othman went straightway to the pulpit and addressed the assemblage met for prayer. He reproached them for intemperate speech and subserviency to evil leaders, whose object it was to blacken his name, exaggerate his faults, and hide his virtues. "Ye blame me," he said, "for things "ye bore cheerfully from Omar. He trampled on you, "beat you with his whip, and abused you. And ye took "it patiently from him, both in what ye liked and what ye "disliked. I have been gentle with you; bended my back

A.H. 33-34.

"unto you; withheld my tongue from reviling, and my hand "from smiting. And now ye rise up against me!" Then, after dwelling on the prosperity of his reign at home and abroad, and the many benefits accruing therefrom, he ended—"Wherefore, refrain, I entreat of you, from abuse "of me and of my governors, lest ye kindle the flames of "sedition and revolt throughout the empire." The appeal was marred by his cousin Merwan, who at its close exclaimed, "If ye will oppose the Caliph, we shall soon bring "it to the issue of the sword." "Be silent!" cried Othman; "leave me with my fellows alone. Did I not tell thee not "to speak?" Othman then descended from the pulpit. The harangue had no effect. The discontent spread, and the gatherings against the Caliph multiplied.[1]

Close of Othman's 11th year.

Thus ended the 11th year of Othman's reign. Near its close was held a memorable council, of which account will be given in the chapter following. The Caliph performed the Pilgrimage as usual. He had done so every year; this was to be his last.

---

[1] Merwan is always represented by Abbasside tradition as the evil genius of Othman. But the *rôle* he played in this character is no doubt exaggerated.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE OUTLOOK DARKENS

34–35 A.H. 655 A.D.

Othman treated with contumely.

THE unhappy Caliph was now hurried on, by the rapid course of events, helplessly to his end. Abd al Rahman, who, no doubt, felt himself responsible from the share he took in the nomination of Othman, was about this time removed by death. But even he had been dissatisfied; and one of the first open denunciations of Othman's unscrupulous disregard of law,—small it might be, but significant,—is attributed to him. A high-bred camel, part of the tithes of a Bedouin tribe, was presented by the Caliph, as a rarity, to one of his kinsfolk. Abd al Rahman, scandalised at the misappropriation of what belonged to charity, laid hands upon the animal, slaughtered it, and divided the flesh among the poor. The personal reverence attaching heretofore to the "Successor of the Prophet of the Lord," gave place to slight and disregard. In the streets, Othman was greeted with cries that he should depose Ibn Aamir and the godless Abu Sarh, and put away Merwan, his chief adviser and confidant. He had the countenance of none excepting his immediate kinsmen, and reliance upon them only aggravated the hostile clamour.

Othman sends delegates to test feeling in provinces.

The conspirators had hitherto burrowed underground. Now their machinations coming to light, rumours of impending treason began to float abroad. The better affected classes throughout the Empire felt uneasy; alarm crept over all hearts. Letters were continually received at Medina, asking what these ominous sounds meant, and what catastrophe was now at hand. The chief men of

A.H. 34-35.

Medina kept coming to the Caliph's court for tidings; but, notwithstanding sullen mutterings of approaching storm, the surface yet was still. At last, by their advice, Othman despatched a trusty follower to each of the great centres, Damascus, Kufa, Bussorah, and Fostat, to watch and report whether suspicious symptoms anywhere appeared. Three returned saying that they discovered nothing unusual in the aspect of affairs. The fourth, Ammâr, was looked for in vain; for he had been gained over by the Egyptian faction. Thereupon Othman despatched a royal edict to all the provinces as follows:—At the coming Pilgrimage the Governors from abroad would, according to custom, present themselves at court; whoever had cause against them, should then come forward and substantiate their grievance, when the wrong would be redressed; else it behoved them to withdraw the baseless calumnies that now were troubling men's minds. Proclamation was made accordingly. The plaintive appeal was understood; and people in many places when they heard it wept, and invoked mercy on their Caliph.

Conference of governors at Medina, 34 A.H. 655 A.D.

The Governors repaired to Medina at the time appointed, but no malcontent came forward to make complaint. Questioned by Othman, his lieutenants knew not of any grievance, real and substantial. To the outward eye, everything was calm; and even the royal messengers had returned without finding anything amiss. But all knew of the dangerous sore in the body politic, and of its spreading rapidly. The wretched Caliph invoked their pity and their counsel. But they could offer nothing of which he might lay hold. One advised that the conspirators should be arrested and the ringleaders put to death; another that the stipends of all disloyal men should be forfeited; a third that the unquiet spirits amongst the people should be diverted by some fresh campaign; others that the Governors should amend their ways. Othman was bewildered; one thing only he declared;—to measures of severity he never would assent; the single remedy he could approve was despatch of fresh armies to fight in foreign parts.

Othman declines help from Muavia,

Nothing was settled to avert the crisis, and the Governors departed as they came. When Muavia made ready to leave, he entreated Othman to retire with him to Syria, where a loyal people would rally round him. But he answered: "Even to save my life I will not quit the land "wherein the Prophet sojourned, nor the City wherein his "sacred body resteth." "Then let me send an army to "stand by thee." "Nay, that I will not," responded Othman firmly; "I never will put force on those who dwell "around the Prophet's home, or quarter bands of armed "men upon them." "In that case," replied Muavia, "I "see nought but destruction awaiting thee." "Then the "Lord be my defence," exclaimed the aged Caliph, "and "that sufficeth for me."[1] "Fare thee well!" said Muavia, as he departed to see his face no more.

Who retires warning Aly and Zobeir.

Leaving the City by the road for Syria, Muavia passed a group of the Coreish, amongst whom were Aly and Zobeir. He stayed for a moment to drop a warning word into their ears. They were drifting back, he said, into the anarchy of "the days of Ignorance" before Islam. The Lord was a strong Avenger of the weak and injured ones. "To you"—and these were his last words—"to you I "commit this helpless aged man. Help him, and it will "be the better for you. Fare ye well." So saying he passed on his way. The company remained some time in silence. At last Aly spoke: "It will be best done as he "hath said." "By the Lord!" added Zobeir, "there never "lay a burden heavier on thy breast, nor yet on ours, than "this burden of Othman's just now."

---

[1] Quoting from *Sura* xxxix. 39.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE PLOT RIPENS. CONSPIRATORS ATTACK MEDINA. DEATH OF OTHMAN

35 A.H. 656 A.D.

Plot to surprise Medina. End of 34 A.H., Summer, 655 A.D.

THE plot now rapidly came to a head. A plan of action had been already formed. While the lieutenants of the Caliph were absent from their posts on the occasion just described, the conspirators were to issue from Kufa, Bussorah, and Fostat, and converge upon Medina in combined and menacing force. There, in answer to the Caliph's challenge, they would present an endless roll of complaints, and cry loudly for redress, reform, and change of Governors. Denied by Othman, they would demand his abdication, and, in last resort, enforce it by the sword. But as to a successor they were not agreed. Kufa was for Zobeir; Bussorah for Talha; Egypt's favourite was Aly.

Conspirators set out for Medina, ix. 35 A.H., April 656 A.D.

The scheme miscarried. But some months later, in the middle of the following year, it was revived and secret preparations made for giving it effect. Under pretext of visiting Mecca for the lesser Pilgrimage,[1] the concerted movement at last took place, two or three months before the annual Pilgrimage. Abu Sarh, Governor of Egypt, at once despatched a message to apprise Othman. In reply he was ordered to pursue the rebels; he did so, but too late; they had already marched beyond his reach. On turning back, he found Egypt in the hands of a traitor, and fleeing for his life, took refuge, across the border, in Palestine. Among the insurgent leaders of Egypt was Mohammed son of Abu Bekr.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. lxxxviii. It may be performed any time of the year.

A.H. 35.

Insurgents encamp near Medina; first retire;

Startled by intelligence that the insurgents were in full march on Medina, Othman ascended the pulpit and admitted the real object of attack. "It is against myself," he said; "by and by they will look back with a longing "eye on my reign, and wish that each day had been a "year, because of the bloodshed, anarchy, and ungodli-"ness, that will flood the land." The rebels soon appeared, and pitched three separate camps, from Kufa, from Bussorah, and from Egypt, in the neighbourhood of the City. The people put on their armour, a thing unheard of since the days of the Apostasy, and prepared for resistance. The insurgents, foiled thus far, sent deputies to the widows of Mahomet, and chief men of the City. "We come," they said, "to visit the Prophet's home and resting-place, and "to ask that certain of the Governors be deposed. Give "us leave to enter." But leave was not granted. Then they despatched each a deputation to their respective candidates. Aly stormed at the messengers, and called them rebels accursed of the Prophet; and the others met with no better reception at the hands of Talha and Zobeir. Unable to gain the Citizens, without whose consent their object was out of reach, the rebel leaders declared themselves satisfied with the Caliph's promise of reform, and so retired. They made as if each company were taking the road home, but with the concerted plan of returning shortly, when they might find the City less prepared. The Citizens, relieved of the immediate danger, cast aside their armour, and for some days things went on as before, Othman leading the prayers. Suddenly, the three bands reappeared. A party headed by Aly went forth to ask the reason. The strangers pointed to a document attested by the Caliph's seal; this, they said, had been found by the Egyptian company upon Othman's servant, whom they caught hastening on the road to Fostat; and it contained orders for the insurgents to be imprisoned, tortured, or put to death. Aly, suspecting collusion, asked how the discovery had become so promptly known to the other companies marching in different directions, as to bring them all back at once together? "Speak of it as ye will,"

But return with document bearing Caliph's seal.

A.H. 35.

they said, "here is the writing, and here the Caliph's seal." Aly repaired to Othman, who denied knowledge of the document; but with the view of clearing up the matter, consented to receive the rebel leaders. Introduced by Aly, they made no obeisance, but with defiant attitude recounted their pretended grievances. They had retired with the promise of redress, they said; but, instead of redress, here was the Caliph's own servant whom they had caught hastening to Egypt with the treacherous document now produced. Othman swore solemnly that he knew nothing of it. "Then say who it was that wrote and "sealed this order." "I know not," said the aged Caliph. "But it was passed off as thine; thy servant carried it; "see, here is thy seal, and yet forsooth thou wast not privy "to it!" Again Othman affirmed that it was even so.[1] "Whether thou speakest truth," they cried in accents loud and rude, "or art a liar, either way, thou art unworthy of "the Caliphate. We dare not leave the sceptre in the "hands of one who, either knave or fool, is too weak to "govern those about him. Resign, for the Lord hath "deposed thee!" Othman made answer:—"The garment "wherewith the Lord hath girded me I will in no wise put "off; but any evil ye complain of, that I am ready to put "away from me." It was all too late, they cried; he had often made, and as often broken, the promise to amend; they could no longer trust him; now they would fight until he abdicated, or else was slain. "Death," said Othman, gathering himself up, with the firmness and dignity that

Angry altercation with Caliph.

---

[1] The facts regarding this document are obscure. It certainly was sealed with the Caliph's signet; but who affixed it, and how obtained, cannot be told. Nobody alleges Othman's complicity. Most traditions attribute the act to Merwan, the Caliph's unpopular cousin, who, throughout the narrative, receives constant abuse as the author of Othman's troubles; but these are all tinged with Abbasside hatred. Aly's accusation against the insurgents is unanswerable. There must have been a preconcerted scheme between the three camps; and there is strong presumption of something unfair as regards the document itself. It is, of course, possible that Merwan may have taken upon himself the issue and despatch of the rescript; and, indeed, there were not wanting grounds for his venturing on such a course. The insurgents may also have got scent of the document, before they started ostensibly with the purpose of returning home. But these are mere surmises.

marked his last days,—"death I prefer; as for fighting, I "have said it already, my people shall not fight; had that "been my desire, I had summoned legions to my side." The altercation becoming loud and violent, Aly arose and departed to his home. The conspirators also retired to their fellows; but they had now secured what they desired, a footing in the City. They joined in the ranks of worshippers at the daily prayers in the Mosque, cast dust in the face of Othman as he stood up to speak, and thrust aside his loyal helpers. The fatal crisis was hurrying on.

Tumult at time of prayer: Othman struck down.

Upon the Friday following, when the prayers were over, Othman ascended the pulpit. He first appealed to the better sense of the Citizens, who, although overawed by the rebels, condemned their lawless attitude. Then turning to the conspirators, he continued,—"Ye are aware that "the men of Medina hold you accursed at the mouth of "the Prophet, for that ye have risen up against his Caliph "and Vicegerent. Wherefore wipe out now your evil "deeds by repentance, and by good deeds make atone-"ment for the past." One and another of the Citizens arose earnestly confirming the Caliph's words and pleading his cause; but they were silenced and violently set down. A tumult arose. The men of Medina were driven from the Mosque by showers of stones. One of these struck Othman, who fell from the pulpit, and was carried to his house adjoining, in a swoon. He soon recovered, and for some days was still able to preside at the daily prayers. At last the insolence and violence of the insurgents forced him to keep to his house, and a virtual blockade ensued. But a bodyguard of armed retainers, supported by loyal Citizens, succeeded for a time in keeping the entrance safe.

Attitude of Aly, Zobeir, and Talha.

From the first day of the tumult, Aly, Zobeir, and Talha (the three named by the rebels as candidates for the Caliphate) each sent a son to join the loyal and gallant band planted at the Palace door. But they did little more; and, in fact, throughout the painful episode, kept themselves altogether in the background. After the uproar

A.H. 35. and Othman's swoon, they came along with others to inquire how he fared. No sooner did they enter, than Merwan and other kinsmen attending the Caliph, cried out against Aly as the prime author of the disaster, which would recoil, they said (and said truly), upon his own head. Thereupon Aly arose in wrath, and, with the rest, retired home. It was, in truth, a cruel and dastardly desertion, and in the end bore bitter fruit for one and all. Alarm at the defiance of constituted authority, and loyalty to the Throne, equally demanded a bold and uncompromising front. The truth was outspoken by one of the Companions at the time. "Ye Coreish," he said, "there hath "been till now a strong and fenced door betwixt you and "the Arab tribes; wherefore is it that ye now break down "the door?"

Othman besieged. Parley with Aly, Zobeir, and Talha.

So soon as the conspirators had shown their true colours, Othman despatched urgent calls to Syria and Bussorah for help. Muavia, who had long foreseen the dire necessity, was ready with a strong force, which, as well as a similar column from Bussorah, hurried to their Master's rescue. But the march was long, and the difficulty was for Othman to hold out till they should appear. The insurgents had possession of the Mosque and of the approaches to the Palace; and, in the height of insolence, their leader now took the Caliph's place at prayer. There were no troops at Medina, and Othman was dependent on the little force which barely sufficed to guard the Palace entrance. It was composed besides train-band slaves, of some eighteen near kinsmen, and other Citizens, with the sons of Aly, Zobeir, and Talha. Apprehending, from the growing ferocity of the attack, that the end might not be far off, Othman sent to tell Aly, Zobeir, and Talha that he wished once more to see them. They came and stood without the Palace, but within reach of hearing. The Caliph, from the flat roof of his house, bade them all sit down; and so for the moment friends and foes sat down together. "Fellow Citizens!" cried Othman with loud voice, "I have prayed to the Lord for you, that when I "am taken, he may set the Caliphate aright." Then he spoke of his previous life, and how the Lord had made choice of him to be Successor of His Prophet, and Commander of the Faithful. "And now," said he, "ye have "risen up to slay the Lord's elect. Have a care, ye men!" (and here he addressed the besiegers) ;—"the taking of life "is lawful but for three things, apostasy, murder, and "adultery. Taking my life without such cause, ye but "suspend the sword over your own necks. Sedition and "bloodshed shall not depart for ever from your midst." Thus far they gave him audience, and then cried out that there was yet a fourth just cause of death, the quenching of truth by wrong-doing, and of right by violence; and for his ungodliness and tyranny he must abdicate or be slain. For a moment Othman was silent. Then calmly rising, he bade the Citizens go back; and himself, with but faint hope of relief, turned to re-enter his dreary home.

Blockade pressed. Suffering from thirst.

The blockade had lasted several weeks, when a mounted messenger arrived with tidings that succour was on its way. This, coming to the insurgents' knowledge, caused them to redouble their efforts. Closing every approach, they allowed neither outlet nor ingress to a single soul. Water hardly obtainable even by stealth at night, the little garrison suffered the extremities of thirst. On the appeal of Othman, Aly expostulated with the besiegers ;—"they "were treating the Caliph," he told them, "more cruelly "than they would prisoners on the field of battle. Even "infidels did not deny water to a thirsty enemy." They were deaf to his entreaty. Omm Habîba, touched with pity, sought with Aly's aid to carry water on her mule through the rebel ranks; but neither sex nor rank, nor having been the Prophet's wife, availed to prevent her being roughly handled. They cut her bridle with their swords, so that she was near falling to the ground, and drove her rudely back. The better part of the inhabitants were shocked at the violence and inhumanity of the Rebels; but none had the courage to oppose them. Sick at heart, most kept to their houses; while others, alarmed, and seeking to avoid the cruel spectacle, quitted Medina. It

A.H. 35. is hard to believe that, even in the defenceless state of the city, Aly, Zobeir, and Talha, the great heroes of Islam, could not, if they wished, have raised effective opposition to the lawless work of the heartless Regicides. We must hold them culpable, if not of collusion with the insurgents, at least of cold-blooded indifference to their Caliph's fate.[1]

Annual pilgrimage, xii. 35 A.H., June 656 A.D.

The solemnities of yearly Pilgrimage were now at hand, and Othman, still mindful of his obligation as head of Islam to provide for their due observance, once more ascended the Palace roof. From thence he called for the son of Abbas, one of the faithful party guarding the entrance, and bade him assume the leadership of the band of pilgrims who should now proceed to Mecca;—a duty which, much against his will, as taking him from the defence, he undertook. Ayesha joined the party. She is accused of having formerly stirred up the people against Othman. Now, at anyrate, the impulsive lady shook herself free from the insurgents, and also, in order to detach her brother Mohammed from their company, besought him to accompany her to Mecca. But he refused.

The Palace stormed, 18 Dzul Hijj, June 17.

The approach of succour at last quickening the rebels to extremities, they resolved on a final and murderous attack. Violent onset was made from all quarters, and

---

[1] The talk among the courtiers of Mamûn, as reflected in the *Apology of Al Kindy*, was that Aly, even at a much earlier period, contemplated the putting of Othman to death (*Apology*, p. 73). There seems no proof or even the slightest presumption of this; but anyhow, one cannot but feel indignant at the attitude of Aly, who would do so much, and no more; who sent his son to join the Caliph's guard at the Palace gate, and was scandalised at water being denied him to drink; and yet would not so much as raise a finger to save his life.

We have also traditions in which Othman is represented as reproaching Talha for encouraging the rebels in a more strict enforcement of the blockade; but, whatever his demerits in deserting the Caliph, this seems incredible. The ordinary account is that Talha and Zobeir, on hearing of the rebel excesses, kept to their houses; others, again, say that they both quitted Medina.

Omm Habîba, as daughter of Abu Sofian, naturally sympathised with Othman. A citizen of Kufa, who had accompanied the insurgents, was so indignant at their treatment of one of "the Mothers of the Faithful," that he went off to his home, and there gave vent to his feelings in verses expressive of his horror at the scenes enacting at Medina.

A.H. 35.

the forlorn band of defenders, unable longer to hold their ground, retired within the Palace gate, which they closed and barred, covering their retreat with a discharge of archery, by which one of the rebels was killed. Infuriated at their comrade's death, the insurgents rushed at the gate, battered it with stones, but finding it all too strong, sat down to burn it. Meanwhile others, swarming in crowds from the roof of an adjoining building, gained easier access, and, rushing along the corridor, attacked the guard still congregated within the Palace gate. One of these was slain, Merwan was left half dead, and the rest were overpowered. Othman had retired alone into an inner chamber of the women's apartments; and there awaiting his fate, read from the Coran spread open on his knees. Three ruffians sent to fulfil the bloody work, rushed in upon him thus engaged. Awed by his calm demeanour and plaintive appeal, each returned as he went. " It would be murder," they said, " to lay hands upon him thus." Mohammed son of Abu Bekr, in his hate and rage had no such scruples. Running in, he seized him by the beard, and cried, " The Lord abase thee, thou old dotard ! " " Let my beard go," said Othman, calmly; " I am no dotard, but the Caliph, whom they call Othman." Then, in answer to a further torrent of abuse, the aged man went on,—" Son of my brother ! Thy Father would not " have served me so. The Lord help me ! To him I flee " for refuge from thee." The appeal touched even the unworthy son of Abu Bekr, and he too retired. The insurgent leaders, now impatient, crowded in, smote the Caliph with their swords, and trampled on the Coran which he had been reading. He yet had strength enough to gather up the leaves and press them to his bosom, while the blood flowed forth upon the sacred text.[1] Thus

---

[1] The blood, we are told, flowed down to the words: "If they rebel, " surely they are schismatics ; thy Lord will swiftly avenge you " (*Sura* ii. v. 138). The appropriateness of the text, however, may of itself have suggested the story.

When the insurgents first rushed in, he was reading the passage in *Sura* iii. 174, which refers to Medina being attacked at the battle of Ohod. The disaffected Citizens are there represented as taunting Mahomet and his followers

A.H. 35.

And Othman slain.

attacked, the faithful Naila cast herself upon her wounded lord, and as she shielded him with her arm, a sword-cut severed several of her fingers, which fell upon the ground. The band of slaves attempted his defence. One of them slew the leader, but was immediately himself cut down. Further effort was in vain. The insurgents plunged their weapons into the Caliph's body, and he fell lifeless to the ground. The infuriated mob now had their way. A scene of riot followed. They stabbed the corpse, leaped savagely on it, and were proceeding to cut off the head, when the women screamed, beating their breasts and faces, and the savage crew desisted. The Palace was gutted; and even Naila, all wounded and bloody, was stripped of her veil. Just then the cry was raised, "To the Treasury!" and suddenly all departed.

His burial.

As soon as they had left, the Palace gate was barred, and thus for three days and nights the three dead bodies lay in silence solemnly within. Then some chief men of the Coreish obtained leave of Aly to bury the Caliph's body. In the dusk of evening, the funeral procession wended its way to the burying-ground outside the city. Death had not softened the Rebels' hearts, and they pelted the bier with stones. Not in the graveyard, but in a field adjoining, the body, with hurried service, was committed to the dust. In after years the field was added by Merwan to the main burying-ground,—a spot consecrated by the remains of the early heroes of the Prophet's wars. And there the Omeyyads long buried their dead around the grave of their murdered kinsman.

Character.

Thus, at the age of eighty-two, died Othman, after a reign of twelve years. The misfortunes amidst which he sank bring out so sharply the failings of his character that further delineation is hardly needed. Narrow, irresolute, and weak, he had yet a kindly nature which might have

---

in these words: "*Verily, the men (of Mecca) have gathered forces against* "*you; wherefore, be afraid of the same. But it only increased their faith,* "*and they said:—The Lord sufficeth for us; He is the best Protector.*" This was a favourite text of Othman's, and he may perhaps have turned to it for comfort now that vain was the help of man.

A.H. 35.

made him, in less troublous times, a favourite of the people. Such, indeed, for a season he was at the beginning of his Caliphate. But afterwards he fell on evil days. The struggle between the Coreish and the rest of the Arabs was hurrying on the nation to an internecine war. The only possible safety was for the class still dominant to have opposed a strong and united front. By his vacillation, selfishness, and nepotism, Othman broke up into embittered factions the aristocracy of Islam, and threw the last chance away.

Columns return to the north.

The columns hastening from the north for Othman's relief, hearing on their way the tragic end, returned to their respective homes.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Election of Aly

35–36 A.H. 656 A.D.

Revulsion of feeling.

On the Caliph's death, his kinsfolk, and such as had helped in his defence, retired from the scene. The City was horror-struck. They had hardly anticipated the tragic end. Many who had favoured or even joined the Rebels, started back now the deed was done. The relatives of the murdered Caliph fled to Mecca, with vows of vengeance. A citizen of Medina, wrapping carefully the severed fingers of Naila in the blood-stained shirt of Othman, meet symbols of revenge, carried them off to Damascus, and laid them at Muavia's feet.

Aly elected Caliph, 24 xii. 35 June 23, 656.

For several days anarchy reigned in Medina. The Regicides had mastery of the city. The Egyptians were foremost amongst these in the first days of terror; and prayer was conducted in the Mosque by their leader. Of the inhabitants few ventured out. At last, on the fifth day, the Rebels insisted that, before they quitted Medina, the Citizens should elect a Caliph, and restore the empire to its normal state. Shrinking, no doubt, from the task which Othman's successor would have to face, Aly held back, and offered to swear allegiance to either Talha or Zobeir. But in the end, pressed by the threats of the Regicides and entreaties of his friends, he yielded; and so, six days after the fatal tragedy, Aly took the oath to rule "according to the Book of the Lord," and was saluted Caliph. Zobeir and Talha were themselves the first to acknowledge him. They asserted afterwards that they swore unwillingly, through fear of the conspirators.

The mass of the people followed. There were exceptions; but Aly was lenient, and would not press the adherents of the late Caliph to swear allegiance. The insurgents, having themselves done homage, departed to tell the tale at Kufa, Bussorah, and Fostat.

A.H. 35–36.

Declines to punish regicides.

No bed of roses was strewn for Aly. Whether at home or abroad, work rough and anxious was before him. To the standing contention between the Bedouins and Coreish was now added the cry of vengeance on the Regicides. Red-handed treason had loosened the bonds of society, and constituted authority was set at nought. Bands of Bedouins, scenting plunder from afar, hung about the City. Encouraged by the servile population now broken loose, they refused to depart.[1] Aly was pressed to vindicate the majesty of law, and punish the men who had stained their hands with the blood of Othman. Even Talha and Zobeir, awakening too late to the portentous nature of the crime enacted, with little check from them, and before their very eyes, urged this. "My brothers," replied Aly, "I am not indifferent to "what ye say, but helpless. The wild Bedouins and rampant slaves will have their way. What is this but an "outburst of paganism long suppressed;—a return, for the "moment, to the days of Ignorance, a work of Satan? "Just now they are beyond our power. Wait; and the "Lord will guide us." This waiting, hesitating mood, was the bane of Aly's life. He was over fifty years of age, and, though vigorous in his earlier years, had become

---

[1] A servile population, captives of war, had been pouring for years into Medina as into other centres. They were employed as domestics, warders, bodyguards, or followed trades, paying profits to their masters. On the outbreak they broke away into defiant attitude. This would occur the more readily at Medina, as they formed the guards of the Treasury and Mansions of the great men; and, being the only trained force there, they felt their power. We find them similarly taking part in the outbreaks at Bussorah and elsewhere. Like the Janissaries or Memluks of later days, they were a petulant brood. Immediately on homage being done to Aly, they lampooned him in minatory verses, to which Aly (not to be outdone in the poetry even of slaves) replied in extempore couplets. Proclamation was made that slaves not returning to their masters would be treated as outlaws; but it had no effect.

A.H. 35–36.

corpulent and inactive now. He loved ease; and while sometimes obstinate and self-willed, his ordinary maxim was that things left to themselves would surely mend.

Coreish alarmed.

The Coreish were anxious and alarmed. The revolt, ostensibly against Othman's ungodly rule, was taking now far wider range. The Bedouins were impatient of Coreishite control; and that which had happened to the Omeyyad family, now forced to fly Medina, might any moment happen to themselves. Yet Aly, though he denounced the work of the Regicides as high treason, took no steps to punish it, but temporised. Prompt and vigorous pursuit would no doubt have been joined in, heart and soul, by all the leaders and better classes of Islam. He chose rather to let the vessel drift, as it shortly did, into the vortex of rebellion.

Aly would depose Muavia in Syria,

The confirmation, or supersession, of the provincial Governors was another pressing matter; and here Aly, turning a deaf ear to his friends, proved wilful and precipitate. When Ibn Abbas returned from the pilgrimage at Mecca, he found Moghira wisely urging Aly to retain the Governors generally in their posts, at least till the Empire at large had recognised his succession to the Throne. But Aly refused. The son of Abbas now pressed the same view: "At anyrate," he said, "retain "Muavia; it was Omar, not Othman, who placed him "there; and all Syria followeth after him." The advice, coming from so near a kinsman, deserved consideration. But Aly, with family hatred against the Omeyyad line, answered sharply, "Nay; I will not confirm him even for "a single day." "If thou depose him," reasoned his friend, "the Syrians will question thine election: and, "still worse, accusing thee of the blood of Othman, rise "up as one man against thee. Confirm him in the "government of Syria, and they care not who is Caliph. "When thou art firmly seated, depose him if thou wilt. "It will be easy then." "Never," answered Aly; "he "shall have nought but the sword from me." "Thou "art brave," Ibn Abbas replied, "but innocent of the "craft of war; and hath not the Prophet himself said, "*What is war but a game of deception?*" "That is true," responded Aly, "but I will have none of Muavia." "Then," said Ibn Abbas, "thou hadst better depart to "thy property at Yembo, and close the gates of thy "stronghold there behind thee; for everywhere the "Bedouins are hounding along; and if thou makest others "thine enemies, these will surely find thee out, and lay "the blood of Othman at thy door." "Come," said Aly, trying another line, "thou shalt go forth thyself to Syria. "See, now, I have appointed thee." "That," replied Ibn Abbas, "can never be. Muavia would surely behead me "or cast me into prison because of Othman's death, and "my being kin to thee. Hearken, and make terms with "him ere it be too late." But Aly turned a deaf ear.

And appoint new governors throughout the Empire, i. 36 A.H., July 656.

Acting on this wayward impulse, Aly sent men of his own to replace existing governors throughout the Empire. In most places these met with but a sorry reception. At Bussorah, indeed, Ibn Aamir, unwilling to provoke hostilities, retired to Mecca, and his successor, Othman ibn Honeif, entered unopposed; but the faction which clung to the memory of the late Caliph was as strong there as that which favoured Aly, while a third party waited the out-turn of events at Medina. In Egypt it was much the same. Cays, appointed to the command, was a wise and able ruler; but he only succeeded in crossing the frontier by feigning attachment to the cause of Othman; while a strong and aggressive faction throughout the country, swore that they would not submit until the Regicides were brought to justice. In Yemen, the new Governor obtained possession, but only after his predecessor had carried off to Mecca all the treasure. The two officers nominated to Kufa and Syria met with so rough a reception, that they were glad to escape with their lives back to Medina.

Sends letters to Muavia and Abu Musa.

Dispirited by these events, Aly took counsel with Talha and Zobeir. The sedition he had apprehended was already kindled, and would spread like wild-fire, catching whatever might come in its way. "Then," replied they, "let us depart, that we may do thee service "in the field." "Wait," answered Aly; "the cautery

A.H. 35-36.

must be the last resort." So he resolved in the first instance to address letters to Muavia, and also to Abu Musa at Kufa, demanding their allegiance. Abu Musa replied in loyal terms, but withal, bade the Caliph beware of the disaffection which in Kufa was rife around him. With Syria, communication was utterly cut off; weeks elapsed, and there was no reply. In truth, a strange scene meanwhile was being enacted there.

Emblems of vengeance hung up at Damascus.

Muavia had no sooner received the emblems of Othman's murder,—the gory shirt and Naila's mangled fingers,—than he hung them on the pulpit of the Damascus mosque. There suspended, they remained a spectacle maddening the Syrians to bloody revenge. Still, he took no immediate action. Biding his time, he waited to see what the new Caliph might do. Had Aly been wise, he would have used the angry Syrians to take vengeance on the Regicides, and in so doing crush as well the rising rebellion of the Arab tribes. In this work they would have been his strongest help; for Syria never suffered from the Bedouin turbulence which kept Irac and Egypt in continual turmoil. It had been the early and favourite field of the Coreish, who, settling there more largely than elsewhere, found their influence, in consequence, all the better recognised. Moreover, they inhabited the Syrian cities in common with the Christian population, which had surrendered for the most part on favourable terms. Society was thus throughout all classes orderly and loyal; whereas Bussorah and Kufa were filled with restless headstrong Arab tribes which held the conquered lands to be their own especial patrimony. Law prevailed in Syria; in Irac and Egypt, petulance and pride of arms. Syria was, moreover, attached to the Omeyyad stock, and so remained faithful to the end.

Muavia sends defiant answer, ii. 36 A.H. August 656 A.D.

The Syrians had not long to wait the outcome of Aly's plans. His abortive attempt to supersede Muavia, and refusal to arraign the Regicides, gave colour to the charge of collusion with them; and having the bloody shirt ever before their eyes, the Syrians soon raised the cry against the Caliph. The majesty of outraged law must now be vindicated; and if the Assassins were not pursued to justice, who but Aly was to blame? Damascus was in this excited temper when Aly's letter reached Muavia. At the first no answer was vouchsafed. The Envoy kept in waiting witnessed day by day the gathering storm. At last Muavia sent a despatch,—stranger than ever had been seen before. The cover was superscribed with this address; *From Muavia to Aly*, and bore the seal of State. There was no other word, all was blank within. The despatch was carried by Cabîsa, a Bedouin chief, and with him the Caliph's envoy was given permission to depart. Arriving at Medina three months after Othman's death, Cabîsa presented the letter to Aly, who broke the seal impatiently. "What meaneth this?" he cried, starting at the blank despatch;—"let the enigma "be explained." Cabîsa first inquired whether his life was safe. "Safe," answered Aly; "the person of an Am-"bassador is sacred. Speak on." "Know then," proceeded Muavia's envoy, "that but now I left behind me, "weeping under the blood-stained shirt of Othman, sixty "thousand warriors, bent on revenging the Caliph's death, "—and revenging it on thee!" "What!" exclaimed Aly, aghast, "*On me!* Seest thou not that I am powerless "to pursue the murderers? O Lord! I take Thee to "witness that I am guiltless of Othman's blood. Begone! "See, thy life is safe." As the Envoy withdrew, the petulant slaves and rabble shouted after him, "Slay the "dog; slay the envoy of Syrian dogs!" He turned, and, apostrophising the Coreish, cried at the pitch of his voice, "Children of Modhar! Children of Cays! The horse and "the bow! Four thousand picked warriors close at hand. "See to your camels and your steeds!"

Aly proclaims campaign against Muavia.

Medina was roused and startled by the Envoy's cry. The time was come when Aly could no longer put his decision off. Hasan, his elder son, ever poor in spirit, counselled waiting; but Aly saw too plainly the hour for action to be now or never. He gave vent to his troubled soul in martial lines, which soon in everyone's mouth, told the people his resolve to make the sword the arbiter

A.H. 35-36.

betwixt Muavia and himself. An expedition against Syria was proclaimed; captains were appointed to command the various companies of the expected levies, and banners were presented to them by Aly; but he was careful to name no one who had taken part in the attack on Othman. Orders were also sent to Kufa, Bussorah, and Egypt, to raise troops for the war. This done, Aly mounted the pulpit and harangued the Citizens. If they failed to fight now, he told them, the power would pass away from them, never more to be regained. "Fight, "then, against the cursed schismatics, who would destroy "the unity of Islam and rend in twain the body of the "Faithful. Haply the Lord will set that right which the "Nations are setting wrong." But the people did not respond to the appeal, and the ranks were slow of filling.

Talha and Zobeir depart to Mecca.

Talha and Zobeir, when they saw affairs thus drifting, again asked leave to quit Medina; and so they now set out for Mecca, on pretext of performing the lesser Pilgrimage.

CHAPTER XXXIV

REBELLION AT BUSSORAH

36 A.H. 656 A.D.

Ayesha retires to Mecca.

BUT, before crossing arms with Muavia, heavy work was in store for Aly.

Returning from Mecca, Ayesha was met on her way to Medina by the tidings of Othman's death and Aly's accession to the Caliphate. "Carry me back," cried the incensed and impetuous lady; "carry me back to Mecca. "They have murdered the Caliph. I will avenge his "blood."

And there stirs up sedition.

In the early period of Othman's troubles, Ayesha, like others, had contributed her share towards fomenting public discontent. But she was no party to the cruel attack of the Conspirators; and had, in fact, sought to detach her brother from them by inviting him to accompany her to Mecca. Vain and factious, she had never forgiven the unhandsome conduct of Aly on the occasion when her virtue had been doubted by the Prophet;[1] and now she would gladly have seen Zobeir succeed instead. In place, therefore, of continuing her journey home, she turned and went straightway back again to Mecca. There the disaffected gathered round her, while from her veiled retreat she plotted the revenge of Othman's blood, and with shrill voice harangued her audience on the enormous crime that had desecrated the Prophet's home and resting-place.

Thus when Zobeir and Talha reached Mecca, they found sedition already well advanced. The numerous adherents of the Omeyyad house, who had fled thither on

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 291 *et seq.*

A.H. 36.

Zobeir and Talha with Ayesha march on Bussorah, iv. 36 A.H. Oct. 656 A.D.

the Caliph's death, or still were resident at Mecca, and the factious and servile mass at large, listened eagerly to their tale. "They had left the men of Medina," said Talha and Zobeir, "plunged in perplexity. Right had "been confounded so with wrong that people knew "not which way to turn. It was for Mecca now to lead, "and punish traitors who had slain their Caliph." The standard of rebellion thus raised, many flocked around it. Bussorah was to be the first object of attack, a city favouring the claims of Talha; while Ibn Aamir, the late Governor and friend of Othman, had still an influential following there. The treasure he had brought away, as well as that carried off by Ala from Yemen, was now expended in equipping the force, and providing it with carriage. Ayesha, spurning the restraints of sex, prepared to join the campaign and stir up the men of Bussorah, as she had stirred up those of Mecca. Haphsa was with difficulty restrained by her brother Abdallah, son of Omar (who had just fled from Medina, and held aloof from either side), from following her Sister-widow. At length, some four months after Othman's death, the rebel army set out 3000 strong, of whom 1000 were men of Mecca and Medina. Ayesha travelled in her litter on a camel, destined to give its name to the first engagement in the civil war. The other widows of Mahomet residing at Mecca accompanied her a little way, and then returned. As they parted, the company gave vent to their feelings, and wept bitterly at the louring outlook;—"there was no "such weeping, before or after, as then; so that day was "called *The Day of Tears*."

Ambition mingled with cry for revenge.

Questions began to arise whether Talha or Zobeir would in event of victory be the Caliph; but Ayesha, staying the strife, as premature, desired that Abdallah son of Zobeir should lead the prayers; and it was given out that the choice of the future Caliph would be left, as heretofore, to the men of Medina. Said, ex-governor of Kufa, distrusting the motives of the leaders, turned aside at the last moment, and with his company went back to Mecca. As the remaining cavalcade swept by him, shouting that they were on their way to destroy the murderers of Othman, Said cried out, "Whither away? the objects of "your vengeance (meaning Talha and Zobeir) are on "their camels' humps before your eyes. Slay them both, "and return then to your homes!" It is not improbable that with both of these, and their followers also, ambition was mistaken for desire of just revenge. In the whirl of passion, party-cry too often takes the place of reason; and we need not doubt that both leaders and followers had wrought themselves into the belief that punishment of the high treason enacted at Medina was their real object.

Ayesha's qualm of conscience.

Notwithstanding all this parade of justice, the conscience of Ayesha was ill at ease. As they journeyed through the desert, her camel-driver beguiled the tedium of the night by calling out the names of the hills and valleys through which they passed. Approaching a Bedouin settlement, the dogs began to howl;—*The Valley of Hawâb!* cried the guide, noting their progress. Ayesha started and screamed. Something dreadful which Mahomet had spoken about the barking of the dogs of Hawâb, flashed across her memory. "Carry me back," she cried; and, making her camel kneel, she hastily alighted from her litter. "Alas and alas!" she continued, "for I heard the Prophet say, reproaching us, as he sat "surrounded by his Wives one day: '*O that I knew which* "'*amongst you it is at whom the dogs of Hawâb will* "'*bark!*' It is me! it is me! the wretched woman of "Hawâb. I will not take another step on this ill-omened "expedition." They sought to persuade her that the guide had mistaken the name; but she refused to stir, and the army halted for a whole day. In despair, they bethought them of a stratagem. The following night, they raised the cry that Aly was upon them. The greater terror prevailing, Ayesha hastened to her camel, and resumed the march.

Aly fails to intercept the rebels.

The alarm, feigned for the purpose, was not altogether groundless. When rumours of the defection first reached Medina, Aly refused to move against the malcontents so long as no overt act of rebellion threatened the unity of

A.H. 36.

Islam. But shortly after, news arrived of the design on Bussorah. At the first, Aly was disposed to congratulate himself that the conspirators had not made Kufa, with its greater Bedouin population, their object. The son of Abbas, however, pointed out that Bussorah was really the more dangerous, because fewer of the leading Chiefs were there, able to curb the people and repress rebellion. Aly admitted this; and, now thoroughly alarmed, gave orders that the column destined for Syria should march instead to Nejd, hoping thereby to intercept the rebels on their way to Bussorah. But the people still hung back. At last a column of 900 men was got together, at the head of which Aly himself marched hastily in pursuit of the insurgents; but on striking the Mecca road he found that they had already passed. Not being equipped for further advance, he halted there. Messengers were sent to Kufa, Egypt, and elsewhere, demanding reinforcements; and for these the Caliph waited before he ventured forward.

Ayesha. Talha, and Zobeir attack Bussorah.

To return to Ayesha. The insurgent army, having resumed its march, reached Bussorah, and encamped close by. Messages were exchanged, and Ibn Honeif, the Governor, aware that the cry of vengeance on the Regicides really covered designs against his master Aly, called an assembly, to try the temper of the people. Finding from the uproar that the strangers had a strong party in the City, he put on his armour, and, followed by the larger portion of the Citizens, went forth to meet the enemy, who, on their side, were joined from the town by all the malcontents. A parley ensued. Talha, the favourite at Bussorah, Zobeir, and even Ayesha with shrill voice, all three declaimed against the murderers of Othman, and demanded justice. The other side were equally loud in their protestations against Ayesha and her attack upon their City. It was a shame, they said, and a slight on the memory of the Prophet, for her to forego the sanctity of the Veil, and the proprieties of "Mother of the Faithful." Aly had been duly elected, and saluted Caliph; and now Talha and Zobeir were treacherously violating the allegiance which they had been the first to swear. These, again, both pro-

A.H. 36.

Reference to Medina on question of compulsion.

tested that the oath had been forced upon them. On this point the controversy turned; and from words they fell to blows. Night interposed; but fighting was resumed the following day, and with so serious a loss to the loyalists that a truce was called, and agreement come to, on the understanding that the facts should be ascertained from Medina. If force had really been put upon Zobeir and Talha to take the oath, then Ibn Honeif would retire and leave the City in their hands. An Envoy accredited by either side was accordingly deputed to Medina. He arrived there while Aly was absent in his camp, and forthwith proclaimed his mission before the assembled City. The people at first were silent. At last, one declared that both Talha and Zobeir had done homage under compulsion, whereupon a great tumult arose; and the Envoy, having seen and heard enough to prove diversity of view, at once took leave.

Bussorah seized by Talha and Zobeir, 24 iv. 36 A.H. 19 Oct. 656 A.D.

When tidings of these things reached Aly, who was with his army in Nejd, he addressed a letter to Ibn Honeif, his governor. "There was no compulsion," he wrote, "on either Talha or Zobeir; neither of these my "adversaries was constrained otherwise than by the will "of the majority. By the Lord! if their object be to "make me abdicate, they are without excuse; if it be "any other thing, I am ready to consider it." So when the Envoy returned from Medina, and when upon his report the insurgents called on Ibn Honeif to evacuate the City according to agreement he produced the Caliph's letter, and refused. But the rebels had already obtained a footing within the City. Arming themselves, they repaired to the Mosque for evening service, and, the night being dark and stormy, were not perceived until they had overpowered the bodyguard, entered the adjoining Palace, and made Ibn Honeif a prisoner. On the following day, a severe conflict raged throughout the City, which ended in the discomfiture of Aly's party, and so the government passed into the hands of Talha and Zobeir. True to their ostensible object, these now made proclamation that every citizen who had engaged in the

A.H. 36. attack on Othman should be brought forth and executed. The order was carried rigorously out, and great numbers were put to death. The life of Ibn Honeif was spared. Set at liberty, his head and beard were shaven, and his eyelashes and moustaches clipped; and in this sorry plight the ousted Governor made the best of his way back to Aly.

Ayesha seeks reinforcements.

The insurgents communicated tidings of their success to Syria. Ayesha also wrote letters to Kufa, Medina, and Yemen, dissuading the people from their allegiance to Aly, and stirring them up to avenge the death of Othman.

Meanwhile the citizens of Bussorah swore allegiance to Talha and Zobeir conjointly. To avoid appearance of rivalry, prayers were conducted alternately by a son of each. Little active sympathy was evoked by the Usurpers. Talha proclaimed an expedition against Aly. But no one responded to the call, and his spirits fell. Thus some weeks passed uneasily, till the City was aroused by the announcement that Aly with an army was in full march upon it.

CHAPTER XXXV

BATTLE OF THE CAMEL

36 A.H. 656 A.D.

Aly, with help from Kufa, advances on Bussorah, vi. 36 A.H. Dec. 656 A.D.

FINDING that the insurgent troops, with Ayesha, Zobeir, and Talha, had already passed, Aly, as we have seen, halted for a while on the road to Bussorah, with the view of strengthening his army; for, although joined on his march by certain loyal tribes, he still felt too weak for immediate action. To Kufa he addressed a special summons, inhabited as it was by many veterans on whose loyalty he might reasonably depend; and he added force to the call by promising that Kufa should be his seat of government. "See," he wrote, "have not I chosen your "city before all other cities for my own? Unto you do "I look for succour, if haply peace and unity should again "prevail as it behoveth among brethren in the faith." But the summons was at the first unheeded. The overgrown City was made up of many factions; and from some of these the message of Ayesha, demanding revenge for Othman's blood, had already found response. Abu Musa, its governor, was unequal to the emergency. Loyal to the memory of the murdered Caliph, he yet sought to allay the ferment by a neutral course, and urged the Citizens to join neither party, but remain at home. A second deputation meeting with no better success, Aly bethought him of sending his elder son Hasan, in company with Ammâr, the former governor of Kufa, to urge his cause. The appeal of Hasan, grandson of the Prophet, had at last the desired effect. The chord of loyalty in the fickle city's heart was touched; a tumult arose, and

A.H. 36.

Abu Musa, unable to maintain his weak neutrality, was deposed. The Arab tribes rallied, and for the moment heartily, around the loyalists. Soon 10,000 men, partly by land, partly by river, set out to join the Caliph, who, advancing slowly, awaited their arrival. Thus reinforced, Aly was able at last to take the field effectively, and march on the rebellious city.

Aly's' negotiations with Talha and Zobeir.

Bussorah itself was not wholly hostile, and numbers of the citizens came out, to join the camp of Aly. The insurgent army, which still nearly equalled that of the Caliph, now marched forth with Talha and Zobeir at their head and Ayesha herself seated in a well-fenced litter. But Aly's thoughts were for peace if possible. He was a man of compromise; and here he was ready, in the interests of Islam, magnanimously to forget the insult offered him. Apart, indeed, from personal jealousies, there was no disagreement sufficient to bar the hope of reconciliation. The cry of Talha and Zobeir was for vengeance against the murderers of Othman; and against these, Aly as yet did not deny that justice should be dealt. But he was obliged to temporise. He had in his army great numbers of the very men who had risen against Othman; and he felt that to inflict punishment on them, as his adversaries required, would for the present be impossible. Holding these views, he halted, still some little way from Bussorah, and sent forward Cacaa (who with other leaders of renown had joined him from Kufa) to expostulate with Talha and Zobeir. "Ye have slain "600 men of Bussorah," said Cacaa to them, "for the "blood of Othman; and lo! to avenge *their* blood, "6000 more have started up. Where is this internecine "war to stop? It is peace and repose that Islam needeth "now. Give that, and again the majesty of law shall be "set up, and the guilty brought to justice." As he spoke, the truth flashed on the minds of Zobeir and Talha, and even of Ayesha; and they returned word that if these really were the sentiments of Aly, they were ready to submit. After several days spent in such negotiations, Aly, glad at the prospect of a bloodless compromise, advanced.

Tactics of the regicides.

But, as we have seen, Aly's army, recruited at random from the Bedouin settlements, comprised a great number of notorious regicides. Afraid of bringing these into contact with the heated army of his opponents, still breathing out fire and slaughter against them, Aly gave command that none who had shared in the attack on Othman should for the present accompany him in his advance. These in their turn, with Ashtar at their head, became alarmed. Talha's troops, sworn to their destruction, were double their number; if peace were patched up, no hope remained. Reasoning thus, they held a secret conclave, and came to the conclusion that their only safety lay in precipitating hostilities, and thus forcing Aly's hand to crush their enemies. Accordingly they remained behind, but with the resolve that at the right moment they would advance and throw themselves upon the enemy.

Negotiations for a compromise.

The army of Bussorah, numbering some 20,000 men, remained encamped on the outskirts of the city. Aly's force, advancing unopposed, halted within sight; and negotiations for peace went on, evidently substantial and sincere. Aly himself approached on horseback, and Talha with Zobeir rode forth to confer with him. "Wherefore have ye risen against me," said Aly; "did ye not swear homage to me?" "Yea," replied Talha, "but with the "sword over our necks; and now our demand is that justice "be executed against the murderers of Othman." Aly replied that he no less than they held the regicides to be guilty; he even cursed them in no measured terms, but added that for their punishment they must bide their time. Zobeir on his side was softened by certain words of the Prophet towards him which Aly recalled to his mind, and bound himself by an oath that he would not fight. Then they all retired. Both armies, understanding that negotiations were in progress, went to rest that night in security such as they had not felt for many weeks.

Regicides precipitate hostilities.

But anon the spell was rudely broken. Towards morning, a sudden shock changed the scene. The Regicides, during the night, carried their design into execution. Led by them, squadrons of Bedouin lances bore down, while

A.H. 36. yet dark, upon the Bussorah tents. In a moment all was confusion. Each camp believed that it had been attacked by the other; and the dawn found both armies drawn up, as the conspirators desired, in mortal combat against each other. In vain Aly endeavoured to hold back his men. The sense of treachery embittered the conflict. It was a strange engagement, — the first in which Moslems had crossed swords with Moslems. It resembled a battle of the old Arab times, only that for tribal rivalry were now substituted other passions. Clans were broken up, and it became in some measure a contest between the two rival Cities; "The Beni Rabia of Kufa fought against the Beni "Rabia of Bussorah, the Beni Modhar of the one against "the Beni Modhar of the other"; and so on, with the various tribes, and even with families, one part arrayed against the other. The Kufa ranks were urged on by the Regicides, who felt that, unless Aly conquered, they were all doomed men. The fierceness and obstinacy of the battle can be only thus accounted for. One of the combatants tells us that "when the opposing sides came "together breast to breast, with a furious shock, the noise "was like that of washermen at the riverside."[1] The attitude of the leaders was in marked contrast with the bitter struggle of the ranks. Zobeir, half-hearted since his interview with Aly, left the battlefield according to his promise, and was killed in an adjoining valley. Talha, disabled by an arrow in the leg, was carried into Bussorah, where he died. Bereft of their leaders, the insurgent troops gave way. They were falling back upon the city, when they passed by the camel of Ayesha. Attacked fiercely all around, she from within her litter kept crying out with fruitless energy,—"Slay the murderers of Othman." The word ran through the retiring ranks, that "the Mother of the Faithful was in peril," and they gallantly stayed their flight to rescue her. Long and cruelly the conflict raged around the fated camel. One after another, brave warriors rushed to seize her standard; one after another they were cut down. Of the Coreish seventy perished by the bridle.

Zobeir and Talha killed.

---

[1] The metaphor will be appreciated by the Eastern traveller.

A.H. 36.

At last, Aly, perceiving that her camel was the rallying-point of the enemy, sent one of his captains to hamstring, and thus disable it. With a loud cry the animal fell to the ground. The struggle ceased and the insurgents retired into the city. The litter bristling with arrows like a hedgehog, was taken down, and, by desire of Aly, placed in a retired spot, where Ayesha's brother Mohammed pitched a tent for her. As he drew aside the curtain, she screamed at the unknown intrusion; — "Are thine own "people, then," he said, "become strange unto thee?" "It is my brother!" she exclaimed, and suffered herself to be led into the tent. The brave but wayward lady had escaped without a wound.

Losses in the battle of the Camel.

The carnage in the ill-starred *Battle of the Camel* (for so it came to be called) was very great. The field was covered with 10,000 bodies in equal proportion on either side; and this, notwithstanding that the victory was not followed up. For Aly had given orders that no fugitive should be pursued, nor any wounded soldier slain, nor plunder seized, nor the privacy of any house invaded. A great trench was dug, and into it the dead were lowered, friends and foes alike. Aly, encamped for three days without the City, himself performed the funeral service. It was a new experience to bury the dead slain in battle not against the infidel, but believer fighting against believer. Instead of cursing the memory of his enemies (too soon the fashion in these civil wars), Aly spoke hopefully of the future state of such as had entered the field, on whatever side, with an honest heart. When they brought him the sword of Zobeir, he cursed the man who took his life; and, calling to mind the feats displayed by the brave man that wielded it in the early battles of Islam, exclaimed:—"Many a time hath this sword driven care and "sorrow from the Prophet's brow." The Moslems might well mourn the memory both of Talha and Zobeir, remembering how on the field of Ohod the former had saved the life of Mahomet at the peril of his own; and how often the latter had carried confusion into the ranks of the idolaters of Mecca. Their fall, and that of many of the

A.H. 36. Companions, was a loss to the Empire itself, because seriously weakening the Coreish in the struggle yet to be fought out betwixt them and the Arab tribes. In fact, this victory of Aly was virtually the victory of the Regicides, supported by the factious citizens of Kufa. Thenceforward Aly was wholly dependent upon them. If, instead, he had effected a compromise with Talha and Zobeir, his position would have been incomparably stronger.

Aly's magnanimity towards the enemy.

The bearing of Aly was generous towards his fallen foe. Having entered the City, he divided the contents of the treasury amongst the troops which had fought on his side, promising them a still larger reward "when the Lord "should have delivered Syria into his hands." But otherwise he treated friends and foes alike, and buried in oblivion animosities of the past. Merwan and the adherents of the house of Omeyya fled to their homes, or found refuge else in Syria. All that remained in the City swore fealty to Aly. The only class dissatisfied was that of the slaves and rabble, who murmured at having no share in the treasure, nor any chance of plunder. These, gathering into marauding bands, occasioned much disquietude to the Caliph, and hastened his departure from the City, with the view of checking the mischief they were bent on.

Ayesha retires to Medina.

Ayesha was treated by Aly with the reverence due to one who bore the title of "the Prophet's Spouse in this "life and also in the life to come." She was now five-and-forty years of age, but had lost little of the fire and vivacity of youth. After the battle, the Caliph visited her tent, and expressed his satisfaction at finding her unhurt; adding mildly, but half reproachfully:—"The Lord pardon "thee for what hath passed, and have mercy upon thee." "And upon thee also!" was the pert and ready answer. The best house in Bussorah was given up to her; and there she was waited on by her own adherents. Not long after, she left with a retinue of forty handmaids, attended by her brother. Aly himself accompanied her a short distance on foot; and a large party went as far as the first stage to bid her farewell. Proceeding to Mecca, she

A.H. 36.

performed the lesser Pilgrimage; and then retiring to Medina, no more attempted to interfere with the affairs of State. Her nephew Abdallah son of Zobeir,[1] retired with her. He became famous in the subsequent history of the Caliphate; but that was not till Ayesha had passed away. She spent the remainder of her days at Medina. There crowds of pilgrims visiting the Prophet's grave (her own apartment) gazed wonderingly at the once beautiful and favourite wife of Mahomet; while she, garrulous in old age, became the fertile source of tradition and the narrator of incidents in the Prophet's life beginning with her earliest childhood. She died in the 58th year of the Hegira, aged sixty-six, having passed forty-seven years in widowhood.[2]

Bussorah.

Aly did not stay long in Bussorah. Having appointed his cousin, Abdallah son of Abbas, governor of the City, with Ziad, the able administrator, to aid him in charge of the treasury, he set out for Kufa.

---

[1] His mother Asma, Ayesha's sister, is famous because on the occasion of Mahomet's flight from the cave she tore her girdle to tie up his wallet, and was hence called "She of the two shreds" (*Life of Mahomet*, p. 136).

[2] Tradition abounds in anecdotes about Ayesha. Aly's army taunted her as "the *unnatural* Mother of the Faithful." The soldiers on her side, in reply, extemporised a couplet, extolling her as "the noblest and best of Mothers." When they told this to her, she was much affected, and exclaimed, "Would that I had died twenty years before this!" Aly, also, when he heard it, said, "Would that I too had died twenty years ago!"

Ayesha, always ready in repartee, was not very particular in her language. Asim approaching her litter on the field, she cursed him for the liberty he had taken. "It was but a little something red and white," he said impudently, "that I caught a glimpse of." "The Lord uncover thy nakedness," she cried angrily; "cut off thy hands, and make thy wife a widow!" All which (they say) came to pass. A saucy passage is related between her and the aged Ammâr, who said, as she was leaving, "Praise be to the Lord that we "shall hear no more that vile tongue of thine."

When starting for Mecca, with Aly and a company around her, she said, "Let us not entertain hard thoughts one against the other; for verily, "as regardeth Aly and myself, there happened not anything between us" (alluding to her misadventure in the Prophet's lifetime, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 289) "but that which is wont to happen between a wife and her husband's "family; and verily Aly was one of the best of them that entertained suspi-"cions against me." Aly replied: "She speaketh the truth; there was "nought, beyond what she saith, between her and me." And then he went on to quote Mahomet's own words regarding Ayesha, that "she was not only "his wife in this world, but would be equally his wife in the world to come."

CHAPTER XXXVI

ALY TRANSFERS HIS SEAT OF GOVERNMENT TO KUFA. AFFAIRS IN EGYPT

36 A.H. 656–657 A.D.

Medina abandoned as capital of Islam.

AS Aly rode forth from Medina in pursuit of the insurgent army, a citizen seized his bridle; "Stay!" he cried earnestly;—"if thou goest forth from hence, the government will depart from this City never more to return." He was pushed aside, as one having lost his wits; but his words were long remembered, and the prophecy was true. Medina was to be the seat of Empire no more.

Aly's entry into Kufa, vii. 36 A.H. Jan. 657 A.D.

In the 36th year of the Hegira, seven months after the death of Othman, Aly entered Kufa. The first four of these had been spent at Medina; the other three in the campaign of "the Camel"; and a short stay at Bussorah. No Caliph had as yet visited Kufa. It was now to be the seat of Aly's government. The inhabitants were flattered by the honour thus put upon them. The City had certain advantages; for in it were many leading men, able, and some of them willing, to support the Caliph. Moreover, Aly might calculate on the jealousy of Irac towards Syria in the approaching struggle with Muavia. But these advantages were all more than counterbalanced by the factious humour of the populace. It was the focus of Bedouin democracy; and the spirit of the Bedouins was yet untamed. What had they gained, the men of Kufa asked, by the insurrection against Othman? The cry of vengeance on the Regicides was for the moment silenced; but things, they said, were drifting back into the old Coreishite groove. The charge was, in fact, the same

Factious spirit there.

as the sons of the Desert were making all round. "Aly "hath set up his cousins, the sons of Abbas, everywhere,— "in Medina, Mecca, Yemen, and now again at Bussorah, "while he himself will rule at Kufa. Of what avail that "we made away with Othman, and have shed our own "blood, fighting against Zobeir and Talha?" So spoke the arch-conspirator Ashtar among his friends at Bussorah; and Aly, fearful of such teaching, took him in his train to Kufa, where, among the excitable populace, there was even greater danger. Another uneasy symptom was that the servile dregs and baser sort of Bussorah, breaking loose from all control, went forth in a body and took possession of Sejestan on the Persian frontier. They killed the leader sent by Aly to suppress the rising, and were not put down till Ibn Abbas himself attacked them with a force from Bussorah.

Struggle in prospect with Syria.

It was in the West, however, that the sky loured most. It was but a shorn and truncated Caliphate which Aly enjoyed, so long as his authority was scorned in Syria. A mortal combat with Muavia loomed in that direction. But, before resuming the Syrian thread, we must first turn to Egypt.

Cays, governor of Egypt, ii. 36 A.H. Aug. 650 A.D.

That heavy charge had been committed to Cays, son of Sad ibn Obâda, the citizen nearly elected Caliph at the Prophet's death. Of approved ability and judgment, and a loyal follower of Aly, he declined to take soldiers with him to Egypt, saying that the Caliph had more need of them than he, and preferring instead the support of seven "Companions," who accompanied him. On his approach, the rebel Governor fled to Syria, where he lost his life. Cays was well received by the Egyptians, who swore allegiance to him on behalf of Aly. But a strong faction sheltered in a neighbouring district, loudly demanded satisfaction for the death of Othman. Cays wisely left these alone for the present, waiving even the demand for tithe. In other respects he held Egypt with firm grasp.

In prospect of an early attack by Aly, Muavia became uneasy at the Egyptian border being commanded by so

A.H. 36.

Cays supplanted by Muavia's intrigue.

able a ruler as Cays, whom he made every effort to detach from Aly. Upbraiding him with having joined a party still imbued with the blood of Othman, he called upon Cays to repent, and promised that, if he joined in avenging the crime, he should be confirmed in the government of Egypt, and his kinsmen promoted to such office as he might desire. Cays, unwilling to precipitate hostilities, fenced his answer with well-balanced words. Of Aly's complicity in the foul deed there was as yet, he said, no evidence; he would wait. Meanwhile he had no intention of making attack on Syria. Again pressed by Muavia, Cays frankly declared that he was, and would remain, a staunch supporter of the Caliph. Thereupon Muavia sought craftily to stir up jealousy between Aly and his Lieutenant. He gave out that Cays was temporising, and spoke of his leniency towards the Egyptian malcontents as proving that he was one at heart with them. The report, assiduously spread, reached, as intended, the court of Aly, where it was taken up by those who either doubted the fidelity of Cays or envied his prosperity. To test his obedience, Aly ordered an advance against the malcontents; and the remonstrance of Cays against the step as premature, was taken as proof of his complicity. He was deposed, and the regicide Mohammed son of Abu Bekr, appointed in his room. Cays retired in anger to Medina, where, as on neutral ground, adherents of either side were unmolested; but finding no peace there from the taunts of Merwan and others, he at last resolved to cast himself on Aly's clemency; and Aly, on the calumnies being cleared away, took him back at once into his confidence, and thenceforward kept him as his chief adviser. Muavia upbraided Merwan with having driven Cays from Medina; —"If thou hadst aided Aly," he said, "with a hundred "thousand men, it had been a lesser evil than is the gain "to him of such a counsellor."

Mohammed son of Abu Bekr, appointed to Egypt.

Muavia joined by Amru.

On his own side, however, Muavia had a powerful and astute adviser in Amru, the conqueror of Egypt. During the attack on Othman, Amru had retired from Medina with his two sons to Palestine. The tidings of the tragedy, aggravated by his own unkindly treatment of the Caliph, affected him keenly. "It is I," he said, "who, by deserting the aged man in time of trouble, am responsible "for his death." From his retirement he watched the struggle at Bussorah; and when Aly proved victorious, repaired at once to Damascus, and presented himself before Muavia. In consequence of his unfriendly attitude towards Othman, Muavia at first received him coldly. In the end, however, the past was condoned and friendship restored. Thenceforward Amru was the trusted counsellor of Muavia.

Aly's position at Kufa weak;

This coalition, and the false step of Aly in recalling Cays from Egypt, materially strengthened Muavia's hands. The success of Aly at Bussorah had also this advantage for Muavia, that it removed Talha and Zobeir, his only other competitors, from the field. The position of Aly, again, as one of concession to the Arab faction, was fraught with peril. While refusing ostensibly to identify himself with the murderers of Othman, it was virtually their cause that he had fought; and therefore equally the cause of the Arab tribes against the Coreish and aristocracy of Islam. And Aly might have foreseen that the socialistic element in this unnatural compromise must, sooner or later, inevitably come into collision with the interests of the Caliphate.

Strength of Muavia's at Damascus.

The authority of Muavia rested on a firmer basis; his attitude was bolder, his position more consistent. He had from the first resisted the levelling demands of the faction hostile to Othman. He was, therefore, now justified in pursuing these to justice, while, at the same time, in so doing he asserted the supremacy of the Coreish. The influence of the "Companions" had always been paramount in Syria; while the Arab element there was itself largely recruited from the aristocratic tribes of the south; —the result being that the Bedouins were by Muavia held thoroughly in check. The cry for vengeance, inflamed by the gory emblems still hanging from the pulpit, was taken up by high and low; while the temporising attitude of Aly was in every man's mouth proof of complicity with the

A.H. 36.

Regicides. And though many may have dreaded Aly's vengeance in the event of his success, the general feeling throughout Syria was a burning desire to avenge the murder of his ill-fated predecessor.

Aly and Muavia in personal antagonism.

Still, whatever the motives at work elsewhere, the contest, as between Aly and Muavia, was now virtually for the crown; and many looked to "the Grey mule of Syria" as having the better chance. A possible solution lay, no doubt, in the erection of Syria into an independent kingdom side by side with that of Irac and Persia. But the disintegration of the Caliphate was an idea which had as yet hardly entered into the minds of the Faithful. The unity of Islam, established by the precedent of the Quarter of a century, was still, and long continued to be, the ruling sentiment of the Nation.

CHAPTER XXXVII

BATTLE OF SIFFIN

36–37 A.H. 657 A.D.

Muavia's efiant eply to Aly, viii. 36 A.H. Jan. 657 A.D.

AFTER Aly had established himself at Kufa, there followed a short interval of rest. The Lieutenants and Commanders, from far and near, flocked to the new capital to do homage to the Caliph. Towards one of these, a Bedouin chief, Muavia was known to entertain friendly sentiments. Him, therefore, Aly deputed to Damascus with a letter, wherein, after making mention of his election to the Caliphate, and the discomfiture of the enemy at Bussorah, he called on Muavia to follow the example of the Empire, and take the oath of allegiance. As on a former occasion, the Envoy was kept long in waiting. At last he was dismissed with an oral promise that submission would be tendered if punishment were meted out to the Regicides, but on no other condition. With this reply the Envoy further reported that Othman's blood-stained garment still hung upon the pulpit of the Mosque, and that a multitude of Syrian warriors had sworn "that they would use no water "to wash themselves withal, neither sleep upon their beds, "till they had slain the murderers of the aged Caliph, and "all those that sheltered them."

Seeing Muavia thus hopelessly alienated, Aly, resolved no longer to delay, proclaimed an expedition against Syria. At first the people were slack in answering the call. But after a time he succeeded in gathering together an imposing force of 50,000 men. His plan was to march through Upper Mesopotamia, and so invade Syria from the north. A detachment was sent as an advance-guard along the

A.H. 36–37.

Aly invades Northern Syria, xi. 36 A.H. April 657 A.D.

western bank of the Euphrates, but meeting with opposition there, was forced to cross back again into Mesopotamia. Aly himself, with the main body, marched up the Tigris; then turning short of Mosul to the west, crossed the desert of Mesopotamia, and, outstripping his advanced column, reached the Euphrates in its upper course at Ricca. An unfriendly population lined the banks; and it was not without sanguinary threats that Ashtar forced them to construct a bridge. The army crossed near Ricca; and then marching some little distance along the right bank, in the direction of Aleppo, met the Syrian outposts.[1]

Muavia meets Aly on the field of Siffin.

On learning Aly's approach, Muavia lost no time in marshalling his forces, which greatly outnumbered the enemy, and, having no desert or river to cross, were soon to the front. Amru was in command, with his two sons as lieutenants. Aly, desirous of averting bloodshed, had given orders that, as soon as his troops came upon the enemy, they should halt, and, confining themselves to the defensive, avoid precipitating hostilities before opportunity was given for friendly overtures. The vanguards spent the first few days in skirmishing. Ashtar challenged the Syrian officer to single combat; but he was told that, having imbrued his hands in the blood of the late Caliph, he could not claim the privileges of honourable warfare. When the main armies came in sight of each other, Aly found Muavia so encamped as to cut him off from the river, and reduce his army to straits for water. He therefore brought on an engagement, in which Muavia was forced to change his ground, and occupy the memorable field of Siffin.[2] Some days of inaction followed; after which Aly

---

[1] When the people refused to throw a bridge of boats over the river at Ricca, a detachment moved farther up, intending to cross by the standing bridge at Membaj; but meanwhile Ashtar threatening the inhabitants with the sword, forced them to construct a bridge at Ricca. Ricca (Nicephorium) is at the junction of the Belik with the Euphrates, near where the river having approached Aleppo trends thereafter eastward. The outposts met at Sur al Rum, now in ruins, a little to the west of Ricca. It lies near Thapsacus of the ancients, on the line of Cyrus' march.

[2] Siffin lay to the west of Ricca, half-way to Balis (one of Chesney's steamer stations), and about 100 miles from the coast; south-east of Aleppo, and north-east of Hims.

A.H. 36–37.

sent three chiefs to demand that, for the good of the commonwealth, Muavia should tender his allegiance. A scene ensued of fruitless recrimination. Muavia demanded that the murderers of Othman should be brought to justice; while the demand was stigmatised as a mere cat's-paw covering ambitious designs upon the Caliphate. This was resented as a base calumny by Muavia. "Begone, ye "lying scoundrels!" he cried; "the sword shall decide "between us." So saying, he drove them from his presence. Finding all attempt at compromise vain, Aly marshalled his army into eight separate columns, each under a Bedouin chieftain of note. As many separate columns were similarly formed on the Syrian side. Every day one of these columns, taking the field in turn, was drawn up against a column of the other army. Desultory fighting in this singular way was kept up throughout the month, there being sometimes as many as two engagements in a day. But the contest was hardly yet begun in earnest. On either side they feared to bring on a common battle, "lest the Moslems should be destroyed, root and "branch, in the internecine struggle."

Desultory fighting, xii. 36 A.H. May 657 A.D.

The new year opened on combatants, wearied by such indecisive strife and inclined to thoughts of peace, and so a truce was called, to last throughout the month. The interval was spent in deputations, but they proved as fruitless as those which had gone before. Aly, under the influence of the heated Bedouins around him, was hardly now disposed even to blame the attack on Othman. When pressed on this point by the Syrian delegates, he avoided a direct reply. "I will not say," was the evasive answer, "that he was wrongly attacked, nor will I say that the "attack was justified." "Then," answered the Syrians, "we shall fight against thee, and against every one else "who refuseth to say that Othman was not wrongfully "put to death;" and with these words took their final leave. On his side, Muavia declared to the messengers of Aly that nothing short of the punishment of the Regicides would induce him to quit the field. "What?" exclaimed some one; "wouldest thou put Ammâr to death?" "And

Truce during first month of 37 A.H. June 657 A.D.

Fruitless negotiations.

A.H. 36-37. "why not?" answered Muavia; "wherefore should the "son of the bondwoman not suffer for having slain the "freedman of Othman?"[1] "Impossible," they cried; "where will ye stop? It were easier to bale out the "floods of the Euphrates."

Renewal of hostilities, ii. 37 A.H. July 657. So passed the month; and Aly, seeing things still unchanged, commenced hostilities afresh. He caused proclamation to be made along Muavia's front, summoning the Syrians to allegiance. But it only made them rally more closely round Muavia; and a company, girding themselves with their turbans in token of the vow, swore that they would defend him to the death. The warfare thus resumed, daily becoming severer and more embittered, Aly at last made up his mind to bring on a general and decisive battle. Thus, ten days after the renewal of hostilities, both armies drawn out in entire array, fought till the shades of evening fell, neither having got the better. Battle of Siffin, 11, 12, ii. 37 A.H. 29, 30 July. The following morning, the combat was renewed with greater vigour. Aly posted himself in the centre with the flower of his troops from Medina; the wings were formed, one of warriors from Bussorah, the other of those from Kufa. Muavia had a pavilion pitched upon the field; and there, surrounded by five lines of his sworn bodyguard, watched the day. Amru, with a great weight of horse, bore down upon the Kufa wing, which gave way; and Aly was exposed to imminent peril, both from thick showers of arrows and from close encounter. Reproaching the men of Kufa for their cowardice, the Caliph fought bravely, his unwieldy figure notwithstanding, sword in hand, and manfully withstood the charge. Ashtar, at the head of three hundred *Readers*,[2] or *Ghazies*, led forward the other wing, which fell with fury on Muavia's "turbaned"

---

[1] Othman's freedman was one of his followers slain at Medina in the final onslaught of the conspirators. The life of Ammâr, son of the bondwoman Sommeya, was forfeit for this lesser crime, much more for the assassination of the Caliph. Such was Muavia's argument.

[2] *Readers* or *Reciters* of the Coran, those, namely, who, having it by heart (*Hâfiz*), were able to repeat it from beginning to end. They were the most fanatical part of the Moslem forces, answering as they did closely to the Ghazies of our day.

A.H. 36–37.

bodyguard. Four of its five ranks were cut to pieces, and Muavia bethinking himself of flight had already called for his horse, when a martial couplet flashed on his mind, and he held his ground. Amru stood by him;—"Courage "to-day," he cried, "to-morrow victory. The fifth rank repelled the danger, and both sides again fought on equal terms. Feats of desperate bravery were displayed by both armies, and heavy was the carnage. On Aly's side fell Hashim, the hero of Cadesiya. Of even greater moment was the death of Ammâr, now over ninety years, and one of the leading Regicides. As he saw Hashim fall, he exclaimed, "Paradise! how close thou art beneath "the arrow's barb and falchion's flash! O Hashim! even "now I see heaven opened, and black-eyed maidens "bridally attired, clasping thee in their embrace!" So, singing, and refreshing himself with his favourite draught of milk and water, the aged warrior, fired with the ardour of youth, rushed into the enemy's ranks, and met the envied fate. Mahomet had once been heard to say to him: —"By a godless and rebellious race, O Ammâr, thou shalt "one day be slain"; in other words, that Ammâr would be killed fighting on the side of right. Thus his death, as it were, condemned the ranks against whom he fought, and spread dismay in Muavia's host. But Amru answered readily: "And who is it that hath killed Ammâr, but Aly "and the 'rebellious race' that have brought him hither?" The clever repartee ran through the Syrian host, and did much to efface the evil omen.

Battle still rages on third day, 13 Safar. 31 July.

The fighting this day was in real earnest; darkness failed to separate the combatants; and, like Cadesiya, that night was called a second *Night of Clangour*. The morning broke on the two armies still in conflict. With emptied quivers they fought hand to hand. Ashtar, the Regicide, resolved on victory at whatever cost, continued to push the attack with unflinching bravery and persistence. Muavia, disheartened, began to speak of a judicial combat with a champion on either side. "Then "go forth thyself, and challenge Aly," said Amru. "Not "so," answered Muavia, "I will not do that, for Aly ever

A.H. 36–37.

"slayeth his man, and then *thou* shouldest succeed me." Amru, indeed, well knew that this was not Muavia's line, who himself, like his antagonist, was now of an unwieldy mien. It was no time for continuing grim pleasantry like this; and so Amru bethought him of a stratagem. "Raise "the leaves of the Coran," he cried; "if any refuse to "abide thereby, it will sow discord amongst them; if they "accept the hallowed symbol it will be a reprieve from "cruel slaughter." Muavia caught at the words. And so forthwith they fixed the sacred leaves on the points of their lances, and raising them aloft, called out along the line of battle: "The law of the Lord! the law of the "Lord! Let that decide betwixt us!" No sooner heard, than the men of Kufa leapt forward, re-echoing the cry: "The law of the Lord, that shall decide between "us!" As all were shouting thus with one accord, Aly stepped forth and expostulated with them: "It is the "device," he cried, "of evil men; afraid of defeat, they "seek their end by guile, and cloak rebellion under love "of the Word." It was all in vain. To every argument they answered (and the Ghazies loudest of all):—"We are "called to the Book, and we cannot decline it." At last, in open mutiny, they threatened the unfortunate Caliph that, unless he agreed, they would desert him, drive him over to the enemy, or serve him as they had served Othman. Seeing opposition futile, Aly said: "Stay wild "and treasonable words. Obey and fight. But if ye will "rebel, do as ye list." "We will not fight," they cried; "recall Ashtar from the field." Ashtar, thus summoned, at the first refused. "We are gaining a great victory," he said, "I will not come"; and he turned to fight again. But the tumult increased, and Aly sent a second time to say:—"Of what avail is victory when treason rageth? "Wouldst thou have the Caliph murdered, or delivered "over to the enemy?" Ashtar unwillingly returned, and a fierce altercation ensued between him and the angry soldiery. "Ye were fighting," he said, "but yesterday "for the Lord, and the choicest among you lost their "lives. What is it but that ye now acknowledge your-

Hostilities suspended for arbitration by Coran.

A.H. 36–37.

"selves in the wrong, and the martyrs therefore gone to "hell?" "Nay," they answered;—"yesterday we fought "for the Lord; and to-day, for the same Lord we stay the "fight." On this, Ashtar upbraided them as "traitors, "cowards, hypocrites, and villains." In return, they reviled him, and struck his charger with their whips. Aly interposed. The tumult was stayed. And Ashath chief of the Beni Kinda, was sent to ask Muavia "what his "meaning in raising the Coran aloft might be." "It is "this," he sent answer back, "that we should return, both "you and we, to the will of the Lord, as set forth in the "Book. Each side shall name an Umpire, and their "verdict shall be binding." Aly's army shouted assent. The unfortunate Caliph was forced to the still deeper humiliation of appointing as his arbiter one who had deserted him. The soldiery cried out for Abu Musa,—the temporising governor of Kufa who had been deposed for want of active loyalty. "This man," answered Aly, "did but lately leave us and flee; and not till after several "months I pardoned him. Neither hath he now been "fighting with us. Here is a worthy representative, the "son of Abbas the Prophet's uncle; choose him as your "Umpire." "As well name thyself," they answered rudely. "Then take Ashtar." "What!" said the Bedouin chiefs in the same rough imperious strain, "the man that hath "set the world on fire! None for us but Abu Musa." It was a bitter choice for Aly, but he had no alternative. The Syrian arbiter was Amru, for whose deep and crafty ways the other was no match. He presented himself in the Caliph's camp, and the agreement was put in writing. As dictated from Aly's side, it ran thus: "*In the name of the Lord Most Merciful!* This is what hath been agreed upon between the Commander of the Faithful, and——" "Stay!" cried Amru (like the Coreish to the Prophet at Hodeibia[1]); "Aly is *your* commander, but he is not ours." Again the helpless Caliph had to give way, and the names of the contracting parties were written down simply as between "Aly and Muavia." The document bound

Deed of arbitration.
13 ii. 37 A.H.
31 July 657 A.D.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 346.

A.H. 36-37.

them "to follow the judgment of the Coran; and, where "the Coran was silent, the acknowledged precedents of "Islam." To the Umpires, the guarantee of both Aly and Muavia was given of safety for themselves and for their families; and the promise of the people that their judgment should be followed. On their part, the Umpires swore to judge righteously, and thus, so far as in them lay, to reconcile the Faithful. The decision was to be delivered after six months, or later if the Umpires saw cause for delay, and at some neutral spot midway between Kufa and Damascus. Meanwhile hostilities should be suspended. The writing having been duly executed and signed, was numerously witnessed by leading chiefs on either side. Ashtar alone refused:— "Never should I acknowledge this to be mine own right "hand," he said, "if it did but touch a deed like this."

Aly and Muavia retire.

And so the armies buried their dead, and quitted the memorable but indecisive battlefield. Aly retired to Kufa; and Muavia, his point for the present gained, to Damascus. As Aly entered Kufa, he heard wailing on every side. A chief man, whom he bade to pacify the mourners, answered: "O Caliph, it is not as if but two or "three had been slain; of this clan alone hard by, an "hundred and four score lie buried at Siffin. There is "not a house but the women are weeping in it for their "dead."

Discord at Kufa.

The slaughter, indeed, had been great on both sides. And what gave point to Aly's loss was that the truce was but a hollow thing, with no hope in it of lasting peace or satisfaction. The Arab faction, to whose insolent demands he had yielded, was more estranged than ever. When the men of Kufa murmured at the compromise, Aly could but reply that the mutinous soldiery had extorted the agreement from him; and that having pledged his faith, he could not now withdraw. He had thrown in his lot with traitors and regicides, and was now reaping the bitter fruit. Muavia alone had gained.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE KHAREJITES, OR THEOCRATIC FACTION, REBEL AGAINST ALY

37 A.H. 657 A.D.

Arab faction caught by appeal to Coran.

THE quick sagacity of Amru had never been turned to better account than when he proposed that the Coran should be the arbiter between the contending parties. To be judged by the Book of the Lord had been the cry of the democrats from the beginning. The sacred text gave countenance neither to the extravagant pretensions of the Coreish, nor to their rule of favouritism and tyranny. Its precepts were based on the Brotherhood of the faithful; and the Prophet himself had enjoined the absolute equality of all. No sooner, therefore, was the Coran proclaimed than, as Amru anticipated, the Arab chiefs, caught in the snare, took up the cry, and pledged themselves thereto.

Dissatisfied.

Reflection soon tarnished the prospect. They had forgotten how narrow was the issue which the Umpires had to decide. The Bedouins and democrats were fighting not for one Caliph or the other, but against the pretensions of the Coreish at large. It was this that nerved them to the sanguinary conflict. "If the Syrians conquer," cried one of their chiefs, "ye are undone. Again ye will "be ground down by tyrants like unto the minions of "Othman. They will seize upon the conquests of Islam "as if, forsooth, they were theirs by inheritance, instead "of won by our swords. We shall lose our grasp both of "this world and the next." Such were the alleged evils for which they had slain Othman, and from which they had

A.H. 37.

been fighting for deliverance. By the appointment of an Umpire, what had they gained? It was a *Theocracy* they had been dreaming of, and now they were drifting back into the abuses of the past. The Umpires would decide simply as between Muavia and Aly; and, whatever the verdict, despotism would be riveted more firmly than ever upon them. What they really wanted had been lost sight of: nor was there any longer a prospect of its being won.

Draw off into hostile camp near Kufa;

Angrily arguing thus, a body of 12,000 men fell out from Aly's army on their homeward march, but kept side by side with the rest, at some little distance off. Loud and violent in their speech, they beat about their neighbours in rude Bedouin fashion with their whips, and accused one another of having abandoned the cause of Islam into the hands of godless arbitrators; while others repented at their having betrayed the Caliph on the field of battle, and thus separated themselves from the great body of the Faithful. In this frame of mind they avoided Kufa, but encamped in its vicinity at the village of Harora. They chose for themselves a temporary leader. Their resolve, however, was that, when they had gained ascendency, they would no longer have any Prince or Caliph at all, nor any oath of allegiance but to *the Lord alone*, and vest the administration of affairs in a Council of State. Such theocratic dreams were not confined to these schismatics, but had widely leavened the factious and fanatic city Kufa itself.

Aly, aware of the danger, sent his cousin, Ibn Abbas, to reason with the seceding body, but to no effect. He then proceeded in person to their camp, and gained over their leader by the promise of the government of Ispahan.

But persuaded by Aly,

He urged that, so far from being responsible for "the godless compromise," as they called the truce, he had been driven to it against his better judgment by their own wayward and persistent obstinacy; that the Umpires were bound by its terms to deliver their decision in accordance with the sacred text, which the Theocrats equally with himself held to be the final guide; and if the Umpires' deliverance should after all be in disregard of right, he would without hesitation reject the same, and again go forth to fight with them against their enemies.

Retire to their homes.

For the present they were pacified by these assurances; and so, breaking up their camp, they returned to their homes, there to await the decision of the Umpires.

CHAPTER XXXIX

DECISION OF THE UMPIRES

37 A.H. 658 A.D.

Interregnum.

THE interval passed uneasily. Muavia ruled in Syria; Aly, over the rest of the Moslem world. Neither, for the moment, interfered with the other. The Empire was for the moment in suspense.

Umpires meet, viii. 37 A.H. Feb. 658 A.D.

Within the time appointed, Amru appeared at Duma, half way across the desert and, shortly after, Abu Musa; each followed, as agreed upon, by a retinue of 400 horse. Thither also flocked multitudes from Irac and Syria, from Mecca also and from Medina. With intense interest they watched the strange proceeding, which was to decide the future of Islam. The leading chiefs, too, of the Coreish were there; some with the distant hope that the choice might haply fall on one of them.

Their conference.

The Umpires met in a pavilion pitched for the occasion; and there a private conference was held between the two alone. The account preserved is brief and uncertain. Abu Musa, pressed by his astute colleague, admitted that the assassination of Othman was a wicked and unjustifiable act. "Then why," rejoined Amru, "wilt thou not take Muavia, the avenger of the "Caliph's blood, for his successor?" "If it were a mere "question of blood-feud or kinsmanship," said Abu Musa, "then Othman's sons would have the nearer claim. "But succession to the throne must be determined by "the chief Companions' vote." Amru then proposed his own son. "A just and good man," replied Abu Musa, "but one whom thou hast already made to take sides in "the civil war: and above all things we must beware of "kindling mutiny again amongst the Arab tribes." A similar objection shut out Abdallah son of Zobeir; and Omar's son was put aside as not having qualities fitted for command. "Then," asked Amru, when all possible candidates had been named and negatived, "what may "be the judgment thou wouldst give?" "My judgment," answered Abu Musa, "would be to depose both Aly and "Muavia, and then leave the people free to choose as "Caliph whom they will." "Thy judgment is also mine," said Amru promptly; "let us go forth."

And judgment.

The people, in breathless expectation, crowded round the pavilion as the Umpires issued from it. "Let them know," said Amru to his fellow, "that we are agreed." Abu Musa advanced, and with voice loud and clear, said: "We are agreed upon a decision such as, we trust, will "reconcile the people, and reunite the empire." "He "speaketh true," said Amru: "step forth, O Abu Musa, "and pronounce thy judgment." Then spoke Abu Musa: "Ye people! we have considered the matter well. We "see no other course for peace and concord, but to depose "Aly and Muavia, both one and other. After that, ye "shall yourselves choose a fit man in their room. This is "my judgment." He stepped aside, and Amru advancing said: "Ye have heard the sentence of Abu Musa. "He hath deposed his fellow; and I too depose him. But "as for my chief, Muavia, him do I confirm. He is the "heir of Othman, the avenger of his blood, and the best "entitled as Caliph to succeed."

Deposing Aly.

The people staggered.

The assembly was thunderstruck. Even the Syrians had never dreamed of Muavia achieving such a triumph; nor had it entered the minds of those on Aly's side, that their Umpire could be overreached thus shamefully. "What could I do?" cried Abu Musa, assailed on every hand; "he agreed with me, then swerved aside." "No "fault of thine," said the son of Abbas: "the fault of "those who put thee in the place." Overwhelmed with reproaches, Abu Musa escaped to Mecca, where he thenceforward lived in obscurity. In the heat of indigna-

A.H. 37. tion, the commander of the Kufa bodyguard seized Amru, and was roughly handling him, when the people interposed to set him free. Amru returned forthwith to Damascus, where by acclamation Muavia was saluted Caliph.

Muavia saluted Caliph by Syrians.

How the startling intelligence affected Aly, may be judged by the fact that to the prescribed daily service he now added a petition cursing by name, Muavia, Amru, and their chief adherents. Muavia was nothing loth to follow his example. And so the world was edified by the spectacle of the two rival Commanders of the Faithful uttering commination one against the other, in the public prayers.[1]

---

[1] The imprecation used by Aly was as follows: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, "let Muavia be accursed, and Amru," and so on with the chief leaders by name. "Let them be accursed all!" Muavia's imprecations, in the same way, included Aly, his sons Hasan and Hosein, and Ashtar.

CHAPTER XL

THE KHAREJITES, OR THEOCRATIC SEPARATISTS, DEFEATED AT NEHRWAN

37 A.H. 658 A.D.

Aly's design against Syria.

ALY was not content with heaping on his rival malediction. He resolved on immediate renewal of hostilities. There was, however, other work before him in first dealing with an enemy nearer home.

Hostile attitude of theocratic faction, ix. 37 A.H. Jan. 658.

Ever since they had broken up their camp at Harora, the Kharejites, instead of settling down in sentiments of loyalty and peace, had been gaining in aggressive force and turbulence. There should be no oath of fealty, was the theocratic cry, but to the Lord alone, the Mighty and the Glorious. To swear allegiance to either Aly or Muavia was in derogation of that Great name. "Both "sides," they said, "are coursing along, neck and neck, in "the race of apostasy: the Syrians run after Muavia right "or wrong, and ye swear for Aly through black and white. "It is nought but blasphemy." So they drew up their creed in one short sentence: *No rule but that of the Lord alone;* and this they insolently flung in Aly's teeth.[1] In vain the Caliph argued, as before, that Arbitration had been forced upon him by themselves. "True," they readily replied; "but we have repented of that lapse; and thou "must repent of it too, or else we shall fight against thee; "and if so be we are slain, we shall gladly meet our

---

[1] *La hukm illa lillahi.* The creed of the Separatists was that Believers being absolutely equal, there should be no Caliph, nor oath of allegiance sworn to any man, the government being in the hands of a Council elected by the people.

A.H. 37.

Aly's forbearance.

"Lord." Aly yet hoped to win them over. He bore with their seditious talk; and made his intention known of treating them forbearingly. "They should have free "access to the Mosques for prayer. If they joined his "army, they would share the booty like the rest. So long "as they refrained from any overt act, he would use no "force of arms against them."

Kharejites march on Nehrwan, x. 37 A.H. March 658 A.D.

Instead of pacifying the fanatics, this moderation but emboldened them. At last, when the Umpires' judgment was delivered, they denounced it as amply justifying their secession, and resolved at once to raise the divine standard. They looked for heavenly interposition; but even if they perished, it was a righteous cause, which must triumph in the end; and they themselves, protesting against a wicked world, would surely be inheritors of the World to come. Accordingly, about a month after the Arbitration, they began, in concert with the brethren who sympathised with them at Bussorah, to leave their homes by stealth. The conspirators from Bussorah, 500 strong, were pursued by the Governor, but effecting their escape, joined the party which in greater force had issued forth from Kufa. Secular power, and the pomp of this life, were abhorrent from the covenanting creed; and it was only after many had declined the dangerous pre-eminence, and then simply as a temporary expedient, that a Leader was prevailed on to accept the chief command. The design was to seize Medain, and there, under a Council of Representatives, establish theocratic rule as a model to the ungodly cities all around. But the Governor had timely warning, and repulsed the attempt. They passed on, and in small bodies crossing the Tigris farther up, assembled at Nehrwan 4000 strong.

Aly orders levy for Syrian campaign,

Aly did not at first recognise the serious bearing of the movement. The number was comparatively small; and he hoped that, immediately they saw their former comrades in arms marching against the graceless Syrians, they would not hesitate again to join his standard. So Aly mounted the pulpit and harangued the men of Kufa. He denounced the Umpires as having cast the Book of the Lord, equally with the Prophet's precedent, behind their backs. Both were apostates, rejected of the Lord, of the Prophet also, and of all good men;—"Wherefore," said he, "we must "fight our battle over again at the point where, on the "eve of victory, we were forced to leave it off. Prepare to "march for Syria, and be ready in your camp without the "city by the second day of the coming week." Then he indited a despatch to the fanatics at Nehrwan. It was couched in similar terms, and ended thus: "Now, there-"fore, return forthwith and join the army. I am marching "against the common enemy, yours and ours. We have "come back to the time when at Siffin ye fought by my "side; now follow me again." In reply they sent an insulting message:—"If Aly would acknowledge his "apostasy and repent of it, then they would see whether "anything could be arranged between them; otherwise "they cast him off as an ungodly heretic." The stiff-necked Theocrats were thereupon, for the present, left to their own devices, and the business of raising levies for Syria proceeded with. But little enthusiasm was anywhere displayed. Of 60,000 fighting men on the stipendiary roll at Bussorah, 3000 were with difficulty got together. At Kufa, after vain appeal, a conscription was ordered through the heads of clans; and thus at length an army of 65,000 was brought into the field.

And summons Kharejites, who refuse to join him.

Aly sets out for Syria;

With this imposing force, Aly had already commenced his march on Syria, when tidings reached him that the fanatic host was committing outrage throughout the country in the very outskirts of the camp.[1] A messenger sent to make inquiry, met the common fate. Tidings becoming more and more alarming, the army demanded to be led against them; "for how," said they, "can we "leave such outlaws at large behind us, with homes "exposed to their unlicensed cruelty?" Aly, himself convinced of this, changed his course, crossed the Tigris,

But is diverted by Kharejite excesses,

---

[1] The outrages were to the last degree barbarous and cold-blooded. Travellers, men and women, refusing to confess the theocratic tenets were put to death; a woman great with child ripped up with the sword, and so forth.

A.H. 37. and marched against the fanatics. When now near Nehrwan, he sent a messenger to demand surrender of all such as had been guilty of outrage and murder. "Give "up these to justice," he said, "and ye shall be left alone, "until the Lord grant us victory in Syria, and then haply "He shall have turned your hearts again toward us." They replied that "they were all equally responsible for what "had passed, and that the blood of the ungodly heretics "they had slain was shed lawfully." A parley ensued, in which the Caliph expostulated with the misguided fanatics, and offered quarter to all who should come over to his army, or retire peaceably to their homes. Some obeyed the call and came over; 500 went off to a neighbouring Persian town, and many more dispersed to their homes; but 1800 remained upon the field, martyrs to the theocratic creed. With the wild battle-cry, *To Paradise!* they rushed upon the lances of the Caliph's force, and to a man were slain. Aly's loss was trifling.

Who are dispersed and slain.

The Kharejites a chronic thorn in the empire.

It had been better for the peace of Islam if not one of the 4000 had escaped. The snake was scotched, not killed. The fanatic spirit was strangely catching; and the theocratic cause continued to be canvassed vigorously and unceasingly, though in secret, both at Bussorah and Kufa. However hopeless their object, the fanatics were nerved, if not by expectation of divine aid, at the least by sure hope of the Martyr's crown. In the following year, bands of insurgent fanatics once and again appeared unexpectedly in the field, denouncing Aly, and proclaiming that the Kingdom of the Lord was at hand. One after another they were cut to pieces, or put to flight with ease. Still such continual risings could not but endamage the name and power of Aly, who now reaped the fruit of his weak compromise with the enemies of Othman, and neglect to bring them to justice. Fanatics in their extravagant doctrine, these men were too sincere to combine with any purely political sect, and hence they seldom came near to leaving any permanent mark of their creed behind them. But both in the present and in succeeding reigns, we find them every now and then gathering up their strength dangerously to assail the empire, and as often beaten back. Ever and anon, for ages, these *Kharejites* "went forth" (as the name implies)[1] on their desperate errand, a thorn in the side of the Caliphate, and a terror to the well-disposed. A.H. 37.

---

[1] *Kharejite*, "one who goes forth," that is to say, against the Government, demanding, as a Covenanter, its reform.

CHAPTER XLI

REVOLT OF EGYPT

38 A.H. 658 A.D.

Aly gives up Syrian campaign. End of 37 A.H. April 658 A.D.

HAVING dispersed the fanatics at Nehrwan, and recrossed the Tigris, Aly turned his face again towards Syria. But the troops urged that, before so long a campaign, their armour needed refitting. "Let us return for a little to "our homes," they said, "to furbish up our swords and "lances, and replenish our empty quivers." Aly consenting, they marched back and encamped in the vicinity of Kufa. The soldiers dropped off in small parties thither; and in a short time the camp was left almost empty. Aly, finding that none returned, became impatient, and himself entering Kufa, again harangued the people on the obligation to go forth with him and make war on Syria. But exhortation and reproach fell equally on listless ears. There was no response. Aly lost heart. The Syrian expedition fell through; and no attempt was made to resume it.

Position of Aly and Muavia.

Thus closed the 37th year of the Hegira. The situation was unchanged. Muavia, with now a colourable title to the Caliphate, remained in undisturbed possession of Syria, strong in the loyalty and affections of his subjects; while Aly, mortified by an indifferent and alienated people, was now to experience a severer trial in the loss of Egypt.

Egypt in revolt.

We have seen that a powerful faction in that dependency sided with those demanding satisfaction for the blood of Othman; and that Cays having been recalled for not suppressing the dissentients, Mohammed son of

Abu Bekr had been appointed in his room. Casting aside the wise policy of his predecessor, Mohammed demanded of the recusants at once to submit, or to be gone from Egypt. They refused, but, masking their hostile designs, watched the issue of the struggle at Siffin. When on its conclusion Muavia was still left master of Syria, they gained heart and began to assume the offensive. Though repeatedly defeated, the slumbering elements of revolt were everywhere aroused, and Muavia, seeing his opportunity, commissioned Amru to regain the province of which he had been first conqueror.

Amru conquers Egypt for Muavia, ii. 38 A.H. July 658 A.D.

Aly saw, now all too late, the mistake which he had made. He would have reappointed Cays; but Cays declined again to take the post. The only other fitted for the emergency was Ashtar, the regicide, who was sent off in haste to Egypt. But on the way he met with an untimely death, having been poisoned (at the instigation, it is said, of Muavia) by a chief on the Egyptian border with whom he rested. There was joy at the death of the arch-regicide throughout Syria, where he was greatly feared. Aly was equally cast down by the untoward event. His only resource was now to bid Mohammed hold on, and do what he could to retrieve his position. But the faction which favoured Muavia gained ground daily; and when Amru, at the head of a few thousand men, crossed the border, he was joined by an overwhelming body of insurgents. Mohammed, after a vain attempt to fight, was slain, and his body ignominiously burned in an ass's skin.[1] Thus Egypt was lost to Aly; and Amru, as lieutenant of the rival Caliph, again became its Governor.

Aly's mortification at loss of Egypt.

The loss of Egypt was the harder for Aly to bear, as immediately due to his own mistake in removing Cays; and even now it might have been retrieved if the men of Kufa had not been heartless in his cause. Over and again

---

[1] Amru had offered Mohammed quarter. But he was caught in his flight by a Chief so incensed against the Regicides that he slew him in cold blood, and having put his body in an ass's skin, cast it into the flames. Ayesha was inconsolable at her brother's fate, and, though her politics were all against Aly, she now cursed Muavia and Amru in her daily prayers, and thenceforward ate no roasted meat or pleasant food until her death.

A.H. 38. he implored them to hasten to the defence of Mohammed. With difficulty two thousand men were got together, but after so long delay that they had hardly marched before news of the defeat made it necessary to return. Aly thereupon ascended the pulpit, and upbraided the people for their spiritless and disloyal attitude. For fifty days he had been urging them to go forth, to avenge their fallen brethren, and help those still struggling in the field. Like a restive, wayward camel, casting its burden, they had held back. "And now," he said, in grief and bitterness of spirit, "the son of Abu Bekr is fallen a martyr, and "Egypt hath departed from us."

CHAPTER XLII

REMAINDER OF ALY'S REIGN

38–40 A.H. 658–660 A.D.

Remainder of Aly's reign.

NO gleam of fortune lighted up the remaining days of Aly's reign. What with fanatics at home, and the rival Caliphate abroad, his life was one continual struggle. And, moreover, the daily exhibition of indifference and disloyalty in Kufa, the city of his choice, was a mortification hard to bear.

Rising at Bussorah suppressed, 38 A.H. 658 A.D.

The loss of Egypt, and cruel death of Mohammed, preyed upon his mind. He withdrew into strictest privacy. His cousin, Ibn Abbas, governor of Bussorah, fearful lest he should resign, or do something rash and unadvised, set out to visit and comfort him. Muavia seized the opportunity to stir up in his absence the disaffected elements at Bussorah. Among the various clans, he was sure of finding many there who, equally with himself, sought to avenge the blood of Othman; few were zealously attached to the cause of Aly; the remainder were mostly of the theocratic faction, now quite as hostile to Aly as to Muavia. The Syrian emissary, carrying for this end a letter to the citizens of Bussorah, was so well received, that Ziad, who held the City's temporary charge, was forced to retire with the treasure and pulpit of State into the stronghold of a loyal clan, from whence he wrote for help to Kufa. Aly at once despatched a Chief having influence with the local tribes, who were by his persuasion induced to rally round Ziad. After severe fighting in the City, the rebels were at last defeated, and driven for refuge to a neighbouring Castle. There surrounded, the Castle was set on fire, and the

A.H. 38-40.

Syrian envoy, with seventy followers, perished in the flames. The victory was decisive for the time; but the insurrection had brought to light the alarming spread of disaffection, and showed how precarious was Aly's grasp upon the Bedouin races of factious Bussorah.

Kharejite risings.

The spirit of disturbance and unrest was not confined to Egypt and to Bussorah. In a single year, we read of some half-dozen occasions on which considerable bands of *Kharejites* were impelled by their theocratic creed to raise the standard of rebellion. One after another they met the common fate of slaughter and dispersion. But though crushed, the frequent repetition of such desperate enterprises, fruit of a wild and reckless fanaticism, had a disturbing effect. The most serious of these risings was that led by Khirrît; and it is the more remarkable, because this chief had fought bravely with his tribe by Aly's side in the battles both of the Camel and at Siffin. He was driven, like many others, by strong conviction to rebel. Boldly approaching the throne, this Chief told Aly that since he had referred a divine issue to human arbitration, he could obey him now no more, nor even stand up behind him in the Mosque at prayer; but henceforth was sworn to be his enemy. Aly, with his usual patience, said that he would argue out the matter with him, and arranged a meeting for the purpose. But the night before, Khirrît stole away from the City with his following;—"Gone," said Aly, "to the devil; lost, like the doomed Thamudites!" They were pursued, but effected their escape to Ahwaz. There they raised the Persians, Kurds, and Christian mountaineers, by the specious and inflammatory cry that payment of taxes to an ungodly Caliph was but to support his cause, and as such intolerable. With a band of rebel Arabs, they kindled revolt throughout Fars, and put the Governor to flight. A force from Bussorah drove them to the shores of the Indian Ocean. But luring the people by delusive promises, they still gained head; and it was not till after a bloody battle, in which Khirrît lost his life, that the supremacy of the Caliphate was re-established in southern Persia. The Mussulman prisoners in this

Rebellion of Khirrît in S. Persia, 38 A.H. 658 A.D.

campaign were set at liberty on swearing fresh allegiance; but 500 Christians were marched away to be sold into captivity. The women and children, as they were torn from their protectors, wailed with loud and bitter cry. The hearts of many were softened. Mascala, one of the captains, touched by the scene, took upon himself the cost of ransoming the Christian captives, and set them free. Aly, hearing of it, demanded from him immediate payment at a thousand pieces for each captive; and Mascala, unable to pay down so great a sum, fled and joined Muavia.

Khirrît defeated and slain.

The defeat of the Kharejites did not at once restore peace to Persia; for Fars and Kerman threw off their allegiance, and expelled their Governors. To quell the spreading insurrection, Aly employed Ziad from Bussorah, a man, as we have seen, of conspicuous administrative ability. He carried with him a great Court and retinue; but it was mainly by setting one rebellious Prince against another, and by well-appointed promises and favours, that he succeeded in restoring peace; and by his success earned the government of Fars. He fixed his Court at Istakhr (Persepolis), and his administration there became so famous as even to recall to Persian memories the happy age of Noushirwan.

Ziad governor of Fars, 39 A.H. 659 A.D.

Though successful thus in Persia, Aly was subject to trouble and molestation nearer home. Muavia, relieved now from apprehension on the side of Egypt, began to annoy his rival by frequent raids on Arabia and the cities beyond the Syrian desert. The object was various—now to ravage a Province or surprise a citadel, now to exact the tithe from Bedouin tribes, or secure allegiance to himself. Such inroads, though not always successful, inspired a sense of insecurity; and worse, betrayed the lukewarmness of the people in the cause of Aly. These would stir neither hand nor foot to repel the Syrians invading villages close even at their door. To show his displeasure at their listlessness and disobedience, Aly went forth himself into the field almost unattended. On this, the men of Kufa, partly from shame, partly lured by promise

Syrian expeditions against Irac, 38-39 A.H. 659 A.D.

A.H. 38-40.

of increased stipends, marched to the defence of their frontier. In the year 39 A.H. there were nearly a dozen inroads of the kind. Though eventually repelled, it was not always without loss in prisoners, plunder, and prestige. On one occasion Aly's commander, with a flying column, pursued the raiders back into the heart of Syria as far as Baalbek; and thence, turning northward, escaped by Ricca again into Irac. On the other hand, Muavia, to show his contempt for the power of Aly, made an incursion right across Mesopotamia, and for some days remained encamped on the banks of the Tigris. After leisurely inspecting Mosul, which he had never seen before, he made his way back to Damascus unmolested.

Muavia visits Mosul.

Raid of Bosor on Arabia, 40 A.H. 660 A.D.

The 40th year of the Hegira opened with a new grief for Aly. When the time of pilgrimage came round, Muavia sent Bosor, a brave but cruel captain of his host, with 3000 men, into Arabia, to secure for him the allegiance of the Holy places. As he drew nigh to Medina, the governor fled, and Bosor entered unopposed. Proceeding to the Mosque, he mounted the sacred steps of the Prophet's pulpit, and recalling Othman to mind, addressed the people thus: "O citizens of Medina! The Aged man! "Where is the greyhaired aged Man whom, but as yesterday, and on this very spot, I swore allegiance to? Verily, "but for my promise to Muavia, who bade me stay the "sword, I had not left here a single soul alive!" Then he threatened the leading Citizens with death if they refused to acknowledge Muavia as their Caliph; and so, fearing for their lives, all took the oath of allegiance to the Omeyyad ruler. Passing on to Mecca, the same scene was enacted by the imperious Envoy there, and with the same result.[1] Then marching south to Yemen, he committed great atrocities there upon the adherents of Aly. The Governor, a son of Abbas, escaped to his cousin Aly at Kufa. But two of his little children, falling into the tyrant's hands, were put to death in cold blood,

Infant children of Aly's cousin slain.

---

[1] On Bosor's approach, Abu Musa (the Umpire) fled from Mecca for his life. The unfortunate man had been living there ever since the Arbitration, equally obnoxious to both sides.

A.H. 38-40.

with their Bedouin attendant, who in vain protested against the cruel act. An army of 4000 men was despatched in haste from Kufa, but too late to stop these outrages; and Bosor made good his escape to Syria. The wretched Peninsula fared no better at the hands of the relieving army. Many of the inhabitants of Najran were put to death because they had belonged to Othman's party. The men of Mecca were forced to recall the oath they had just taken, and again do homage to Aly. Similarly, the citizens of Medina swore allegiance to Hasan, son of Aly, at the point of the sword; but no sooner were the troops gone, than the Leader of the opposite faction resumed his functions. Thus bitterly was the Peninsula rent in two. The cruel death of his Cousin's infant children preyed on Aly more, perhaps, than all his other troubles; and he cursed Bosor in the daily service with a new and bitter imprecation. The disconsolate mother poured forth her sorrow in plaintive verse, some touching couplets of which are still preserved.[1]

Abdallah, son of Abbas, retires to Mecca.

Yet another grief was in store for Aly. He had promoted his cousins, the sons of Abbas, to great dignity, giving the command of Yemen to one, of Mecca to another, of Medina to a third; while Abdallah, the eldest, held the government of Bussorah, the second city in the empire. Complaints having reached the Court of irregularities at Bussorah, Aly called upon his cousin to render an account. Scorning the demand, Abdallah threw up the office, and, carrying his treasures with him, retired to Mecca. Aly was much mortified at this unfriendly act; and still more by the desertion of his brother Ackil to Muavia.

Aly concludes treaty with Muavia, 40 A.H. 660 A.D.

These troubles, crowding rapidly one upon another, at last broke Aly's spirit. He had no longer heart to carry

---

[1] For example:

"Ah! who hath seen my two little ones—
Darlings hidden, like pearls within their shell?"

As grandchildren of Abbas, their fate naturally occupies a conspicuous place in Abbasside tradition. Aly cursed Bosor, praying that he might lose his senses, and in answer to the prayer he became, we are told, a hopeless, drivelling idiot.

A.H. 38-40. on hostilities with Syria. If he might but secure the Eastern provinces in peaceful subjection to himself, it was all he could hope for now. Accordingly, after a lengthened correspondence, an armistice was concluded between Aly and Muavia, by which they agreed to lay aside their arms, respect the territory of each other, and maintain, in time to come, a friendly attitude.

The double Caliphate. It is possible that the double Caliphate thus recognised, in two separate and independent Empires, by the respective rulers of the East and West, might have been prolonged indefinitely, or even been handed down in perpetuity, had not the tragical event occurred to be narrated in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XLIII

ASSASSINATION OF ALY

40 A.H. 661 A.D.

Conspiracy to assassinate Aly, Muavia, and Amru, 40 A.H. 661 A.D.

THE theocratic Separatists were sorely troubled at the prospects of Islam. It was not that raids and robbery, dissension and strife, had been the order of the day; for to them bloodshed was more tolerable than apostasy. To the Kharejite, the cessation of war brought no peace of mind. A settled government was the ruin of his hopes. Aly having come to terms with Muavia, there was no longer room to expect that the ungodly kingdoms of the earth would be overthrown, and the reign of righteousness restored. Thus the theocratic party brooded over the blood that had been shed in vain at Nehrwan and on other battlefields, and for the present abandoned hope. Many took refuge from the godless tyranny in the sacred precincts of the Hejaz, where they might lament freely over the miserable fate of Islam. As three of these thus mourned together, a gleam of hope shot across their path; —"Let us each kill one of the tyrants; Islam will yet be free, and the reign of the Lord appear." And so, as in the case of Othman, but under another guise and urged by bolder hopes, the three conspired against the State. The fatal resolve once taken, details were speedily arranged. Aly and Muavia both must fall; and Amru also, not only as the impious Arbitrator, but also as the likeliest successor to the throne left vacant by the other two. Each was to dispose of his fellow, as he presided at the morning service, on the same Friday when, being the Fast, the Grand mosques of Kufa, Damascus, and

A.H. 40. Fostat would be thronged with worshippers. They dipped their swords in powerful poison, and separated, swearing that they would either fulfil the task or perish in the attempt. Amru escaped. He was sick that day, and the captain of his guard, presiding at prayers, died in his stead. Muavia was not so fortunate. The blow fell upon him, and was near to being fatal. His physician declared his life could be saved only by the cautery, or by a potent draught that would deprive him of the hope of further progeny. He shrank from the cautery, and chose the draught. The remedy was effectual, and he survived.

Amru escapes.

Muavia wounded: recovers.

Aly wounded in the Mosque at Kufa.

At Kufa things turned out differently. The conspirator Ibn Muljam was able on the spot to gain two desperate accomplices from the Beni Taym. That tribe, deeply imbued with the fanaticism of the day, had suffered severely in the massacre of Nehrwan, and nursed resentment ever since against the Caliph. Ibn Muljam loved a maid of the Beni Taym, who having on that fatal day lost father, brother, and other relatives, was roused thereby to a savage ardour. "Bring me," said the damsel to her lover, "the head of Aly as my dower; if thou escapest "alive, thou shalt have me as thy guerdon here; if thou "perish, thou shalt enjoy better than me above." So she introduced him to two accomplices, who, burning with the same spirit of revenge as Ibn Muljam, were to lie in wait on either side of the door leading into the crowded Mosque. At the time appointed, the Caliph entered the assembly calling aloud as usual, *To prayers, ye people! To prayers!* Immediately he was assailed on either hand. The sword of one conspirator fell upon the lintel; but Ibn Muljam wounded the Caliph severely on the head and side. He was seized. Of his accomplices one was cut to pieces, the other in the tumult fled. Aly was carried into the Palace with strength enough to question the assassin who was brought before him. Ibn Muljam declared boldly that the deed had been forty days in contemplation, during all which time it had been his prayer that "the Wickedest "of mankind might meet his fate." "Then," replied Aly, "that must have been thyself." So saying, he turned to

A.H. 40.

his son, Hasan, and bade him keep the assassin in close custody: "If I die, his life is forfeit; but see thou mutilate "him not, for that is forbidden by the Prophet." During the day Omm Kolthum went into the assassin's cell and cursed him, adding, what no doubt she would have fain believed, "My father shall yet live." "Then, Lady," replied the fanatic, "whence these tears? Listen. That "sword I bought for a thousand pieces, and a thousand "more it cost to poison it. None may escape its wound."

Death of Aly, 17 ix. 40 A.H. 25 Jan. 661 A.D.

It soon became evident that the wound indeed was mortal. They asked the Caliph whether, if he died, it was his will that his son should succeed to the throne. Still true to the elective principle, Aly answered: "I do not "command it, neither do I forbid. See ye to it." Then he called Hasan and Hosein to his bedside, and counselled them to be steadfast in piety and resignation, and kind to their younger brother, the son of his Hanifite wife. After that he wrote his testament, and continuing to repeat the name of the Lord, so breathed his last. When they had performed the funeral obsequies, Hasan arraigned the assassin before him. Nothing daunted, Ibn Muljam said: "I made a covenant with the Lord before the Holy house "at Mecca, that I would slay both Aly and Muavia. Now, "if thou wilt, I shall go forth and kill the other, or perish "in the attempt. If I succeed, I will return and swear "allegiance unto thee." "Nay," said Hasan, "not before "thou hast tasted of the fire." He was put to death, and the body, tied up in a sack, was committed to the flames.

Ibn Muljam put to death.

Aly's wives and children.

Aly died sixty years of age. His troubled and contested reign had lasted but four years and nine months. In his youth, he was one of the most distinguished heroes in the early wars of Islam. But after the Prophet's death he took no part in any of the military expeditions. In his later years he became heavy and obese, and his bald and portly figure was a subject of ridicule to his enemies. For a time he was content with a single wife, the Prophet's daughter Fatima, by whom he had three sons[1] and two daughters, the progenitors of the Syed race,—the nobility

---

[1] One of these died in infancy; the other two were Hasan and Hosein.

A.H. 40.

of Islam. After she died, he took many women into his Harem, both free and servile, by whom he had, in all, eleven sons and fifteen daughters. Aly was a tender-hearted father. In his later years, a little girl was born to him, with whose prattle he would beguile his troubles; he had her always on his knee, and doted on her with a special love.[1]

Aly's forbearance and magnanimity.

In the character of Aly there are many things to commend. Mild and beneficent, he treated Bussorah, when prostrate at his feet, with a generous forbearance. Towards theocratic fanatics, who wearied his patience by incessant intrigue and insensate rebellion, he showed no vindictiveness. Excepting Muavia, the man of all others whom he ought not to have estranged, he carried the policy of conciliating his enemies to a dangerous extreme. In compromise, indeed, and in procrastination, lay the failure of his Caliphate. With greater vigour, spirit, and determination, he might have averted the schism which for a time threatened the existence of Islam, and which has since never ceased to weaken it.

Wise but inactive.

Aly was wise in counsel, and many an adage and sapient proverb has been attributed to him. But, like Solomon, his wisdom was for other than himself. His career must be characterised a failure. On the election of Abu Bekr, influenced by Fatima, who claimed and was denied a share in her father's property, he retired for a time into private life. Thereafter we find him taking part in the counsels of Abu Bekr and his successors, and even performing the functions of Chief judge. But he never asserted the leading position, which, as cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, might have been expected of him; nor is there aught to show that this was due to other cause than an easy and inactive temperament. One indelible blot rests on the escutcheon of Aly, his flagrant breach of duty towards his Sovereign ruler. He had sworn alle-

Desertion of Othman a blot upon his name.

---

[1] The mother of this little girl belonged to the Beni Kilab. The child lisped, and pronouncing *l* like *sh*, was unable to say *Kilab*; when asked to what tribe she belonged, she would imitate the bark of a dog (kilab or kalb meaning "a dog"), to the great delight of Aly and his courtiers.

giance to Othman, and by him he was bound to have stood in the last extremity. Instead, he held ignobly aloof, while the Caliph fell a victim to red-handed treason. Nor can the plea avail that he was himself under pressure. Had there been a loyal will to help, there would have been a ready way. In point of fact, his attitude gave colour to the charge even of collusion.[1] And herein Aly must be held accountable not only for a grave dereliction of duty, but for a fatal error which shook the stability of the Caliphate itself, as he was himself not long in finding to his cost.

Burial place unknown.

Tradition, strange to say, is silent, and opinion uncertain, as to where the body of Aly lies. Some believe that he was buried in the Great mosque at Kufa, others in the Palace. Certainly, his tomb was never, in early times, the object of any care or veneration. The same indifference attached to his memory throughout the realm of Islam, as had attached to his person during life, and it was not till a generation had passed away that any sentiment of special reverence or regard for the husband of the Prophet's daughter, and father of his only surviving progeny, began to show itself.

Divine Imamate, a fiction of later growth.

There is no trace whatever at this period, of the extravagant claims of later days. On the contrary, even at Kufa, the capital that should have been proud of its Caliph, there prevailed at this time towards him and his family an utter want of enthusiasm and loyalty, amounting at times to disaffection. The fiction of the divine *Imamship* was a reaction in favour of Aly's descendants, arising out of the coming tragedy at Kerbala and cruel fate of the Prophet's progeny, which, fostered by Alyite and Abbasside faction, soon became a powerful lever, skilfully and unscrupulously used, to overthrow the Omeyyad dynasty.

---

[1] See above, p. 244, and note.

CHAPTER XLIV

HASAN SUCCEEDS ALY. ABDICATES IN FAVOUR OF MUAVIA

40–41 A.H. 661 A.D.

Hasan succeeds his father, 40 A.H. 661 A.D.

WHEN they had committed Aly, we know not where, to his last home, Kufa did homage, as it were by common consent, to Hasan, his eldest son. But Hasan was a poor-spirited creature, more intent on varying the charms of his ever-changing Harem than on the business of public life, and altogether unworthy his descent as grandson of the Prophet.[1]

But is attacked by Muavia, and mobbed by his own troops.

It was now Muavia's opportunity for asserting his title to the whole Moslem empire. Already, in accordance with Amru's verdict at the Arbitration, he was recognised as Caliph throughout Syria and Egypt. Resenting the succession of Hasan, Muavia at once gathered a powerful army and marched against Kufa. No sooner was this intelligence received, than the Citizens, indignant at the prospect of falling under the rule of Syria, rallied beneath the new Caliph's standard, and an army, 40,000 strong, was ready to repel the attack. But Hasan had no stomach for the war. Sending forward his vanguard of

---

[1] His vagrant passion gained him the nickname of *The Divorcer*, for only by continual divorce could he harmonise his craving for new nuptials with the requirements of the law, which limits freeborn wives to four. He is said to have exercised the power of divorce, as a matter of simple caprice, seventy (others say ninety) times. The leading men complained to Aly that his son was continually marrying their daughters, and as often divorcing them. Aly said the remedy lay in their own hands; they should refuse to give him their daughters to wife. These divorced wives were irrespective of slave-girls, for whom there is no limit.

12,000 men, under the brave and faithful Cays, to meet the enemy, he followed himself irresolutely; and, with the bulk of his army, rested at Medain amidst the luxurious gardens of the old Persian court. While thus ignobly holding back, the report gained currency at Medain that Cays had been defeated and slain. An *émeute* ensued. The troops rose mutinously upon the Caliph. They rushed into his sumptuous pavilion, and plundered the royal tents even to the carpets. A project was set on foot to seize his person, and, by delivering him up to Muavia, thus make favourable terms. The faint-hearted Caliph, alarmed at the outbreak, took refuge in the Palace of the Chosroes, a more congenial residence than the martial camp; and, trusting no longer to his fickle and disloyal people, sent letters of submission to Muavia. He agreed to abdicate and retire to Medina, on condition that he should retain the contents of the treasury, five million pieces, in addition to the revenues of a Persian district; and that the imprecation against his father should drop from the public prayers. Muavia granted the first request; as for the second, he consented that no prayer reviling Aly should be recited within hearing of the Son. The truce was ratified accordingly.

A.H. 40–41.

Hasan abdicates in favour of Muavia, 24 iii. 40. 10 Aug. 661,

And so, after a brief and inglorious reign of five or six months, Hasan, with his household and belongings, quitted Kufa for Arabia. The People wept at his departure. But Hasan left them without regret. They were a race, he said, in whom no trust could be reposed, and who had set purpose neither for evil nor for good.

And retires to Medina.

Cays, whose ability and prowess were worthy of a better cause, remained for some while longer in the field. At length, having obtained terms for all who had been fighting on the side of Aly, and there being no longer any master now to fight for, he laid down his arms and did homage to Muavia.

Cays submits.

Thus, at last, Muavia was able to make triumphal entry into Kufa. Having there received the homage of the Eastern provinces, he returned to Syria sole and undisputed Caliph of Islam. Damascus thenceforth was the capital of the Empire.

Damascus capital of Islam.

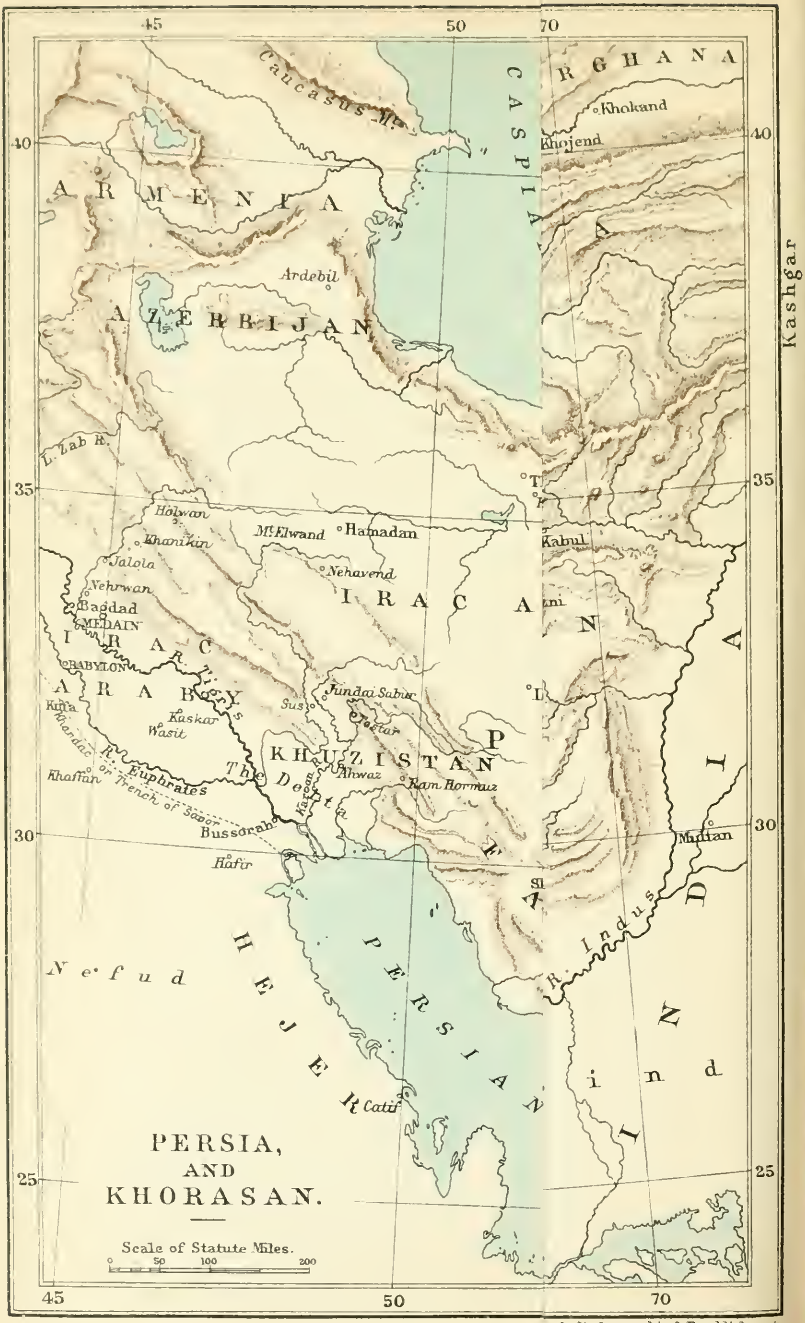
A.H. 40–41.

Continued imprecation against Aly.

The imprecations against the memory of Aly, his house, and his adherents, still formed part of the public service; and so, indeed, they continued throughout the Omeyyad Caliphate.

Hasan poisoned by his wife.

The short-lived Caliph retired to Medina, where, with ample means to gratify his ruling passion, he passed his time in ease and quietness, giving no further anxiety to Muavia. He survived eight years, and met his death by poison at the hand of one of his wives. It was a not unnatural end for "Hasan the Divorcer." Alyite tradition, indeed, would have us to believe that the lady was bribed to commit the crime, and thus exalts the libertine to the dignity of "Martyr." But Muavia had no object in ridding himself of his harmless subject; and the jealousies of Hasan's ever-changing Harem afford a sufficient and a likelier reason. Of his brother Hosein there will be more to tell.


PERSIA,
AND
KHORASAN.
Scale of Statute Miles.
0
50
100
200
45
50
70
40
35
30
25
Caucasus Mt.
CASPIA
RGHANA
Khokand
Khojend
Kashgar
ARMENIA
Ardebil
AZERBIJAN
L. Zab R.
Holwan
Khanikin
Jalola
Nehrwan
Bagdad
MEDAIN
IRAC
BABYLON
ARABY
Kufa
Kaskar
Wasit
R. Tigris
Khandac or Trench of Sapor
Khaffan
R. Euphrates
Mt. Elwand
Hamadan
Nehavend
IRAC A
N
Kabul
Sus
Jundai Sabur
Tostar
KHUZISTAN
Ahwaz
Ram Hormuz
The Delta
Karoon R.
Bussorah
Hafir
P
Multan
R. Indus
INDIA
Nefud
HEJER
Catif
PERSIAN
India

unford's Geographical Establishment.

CHAPTER XLV

MUAVIA

40–60 A.H. 661–680 A.D.

FROM the death of Othman 35 A.H., Muavia was independent ruler of the West; and from Hasan's abdication till his own death, that is, for nearly twenty years, he was undisputed Caliph of all Islam. During this long reign there was prosperity and peace as a rule at home, disturbed only by intermittent outbursts of Kharejite zealots, and by factions still ardent for the house of Aly. Both were easily suppressed, though not without bloodshed, by the strong arm of the Caliph and his able lieutenants. Abroad his rule was equally successful, and extended the boundaries of Islam in all directions.

Muavia's reign, 40–60 A.H. 661–680 A.D.

Amru held the government of Egypt during the rest of his long life, which, indeed, had been one of the most eventful in this history. No man influenced more than he the fortunes of the Caliphate. Brave in the field, astute in counsel, coarse and unscrupulous in word and deed, it was mainly to Amru that Muavia owed his ascendency over Aly, and the eventual establishment of the Omeyyad dynasty. Conqueror of Egypt, and for four years its governor under Omar, he continued in the same post a like period under Othman, who by his recall made him in an evil hour his enemy. Finally reappointed by Muavia on the defeat of Mohammed, he was still at his death the governor of Egypt. He died 73 years of age, penitent, we are told, for his many misdeeds.

Amru. His death, 43 A.H.

The career of Moghira, though less brilliant, was not less singular. A native of Tayif, he had been deputed by

Moghira governor of Kufa.

the Prophet, in company with Abu Sofian, to hew down the tutelary idol of that city.[1] He was ill-favoured, having lost an eye on the field of Wacûsa. Clever and designing, he survived his disgraceful fall at Bussorah, which nearly cost him life as well as honour, and rose again to influence. Finally, appointed by Muavia to that most difficult post, the government of the no longer regal Kufa, he held under strict control the turbulent and restless city, still the frequent scene of theocratic outburst, and of those dangerous conspiracies in favour of the house of Aly which began soon to disturb the Omeyyad dynasty.

Ziad reconciled to Muavia, 42 A.H. 662 A.D.

But perhaps the greatest service which Moghira rendered to Muavia, was that he succeeded in reconciling Ziad to his sovereign. The history of Ziad is one of the most remarkable of the time. He was the reputed son of Abu Sofian, who fell in with his mother, then a vagrant bondwoman, before his conversion at Tayif. By the faithful discharge of important trusts, Ziad overcame the disadvantage of servile birth, rose to important office, and eventually was appointed by Aly to the government of Bussorah and Istakhr. Powerful, wise, and eloquent, he was by far the ablest statesman of the day. Devoted to the cause of Aly, he was bitterly opposed to the pretensions of Muavia, even after the abdication of Hasan. Called by Muavia to render an account of his stewardship in Persia, he refused to do so or to appear at Court even when threatened, if he continued to absent himself, with the life of his sons in Bussorah. A thorn in his side, he caused continual alarm to Muavia. At last, in the year A.H. 42, Moghira, who had not forgotten the occasion on which he owed his life to the partial evidence of Ziad,[2] repaired to Istakhr, and persuaded him to tender his submission. Under safe-conduct he appeared before the Caliph at Damascus, and as a royal gift, together with his arrear of revenue, presented a million pieces. He was dismissed with honour, and provided with a residence in Kufa.

A year or two afterwards a curious episode in his life

---

[1] In A.H. 9, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 437.

[2] Above, p. 188.

A.H. 40–60.

disturbed the equanimity of the Moslem world. As Ziad grew daily in royal favour, Muavia was seized with the desire to remove the stain upon his descent, and thus prove him not the supposititious, but the real and legitimate, son of Abu Sofian his own father. A commission appointed for the purpose held this established; upon which Muavia publicly acknowledged Ziad to be his brother. The announcement raised a scandal throughout Islam, first as contravening the law of legitimacy, and still more as making Omm Habîba—also the child of Abu Sofian and one of the "Mothers of the faithful,"—to be the sister of what (the above decision notwithstanding) was held to be an adulterous issue. Not only so, but Muavia's own kinsfolk, the house of Omeyya, were displeased at the affront thus put upon the purity of their blood. The feeling, however, soon passed away, as it was seen that a pillar of strength had been gained for the Omeyyad dynasty.[1] Shortly after, Ziad was made governor of Bussorah in addition to his Persian command. His strong hand fell heavily on the restless population of that turbulent city, now patrolled incessantly by an armed police of a thousand men. None might venture abroad at night on pain of death; and so ruthless was the order, that an unlucky Arab, wandering unawares into the precincts, was executed for the involuntary offence. The supremacy of law, an experience new to Bussorah, repressed rebellion, and effectually enforced order, where strife and faction had heretofore prevailed.

Ziad acknowledged as brother by Muavia, 45 A.H. 665 A.D.

Appointed governor of Bussorah,

On Moghira's death, he was elevated to the governor-

---

[1] When Ziad proposed to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, his brother (who, offended at his tergiversation in the case for adultery against Moghira (*supra*, p. 188), had never spoken to him since) sent a message to dissuade him: "Thou wilt meet Omm Habîba," he said, "if thou goest on pilgrimage. "Now, if she receive thee as her brother, that will be regarded as a slight "upon the Prophet; if otherwise, it will be a slight upon thyself." So Ziad gave up the design. Again, Ziad, wishing to secure an acknowledgment of legal birth from Ayesha, addressed her a letter in which he subscribed himself, *Ziad son of Abu Sofian*; to which she replied, without committing herself, "To my dear son Ziad." Abbasside writers name him without any patronymic, "Ziad, *son of his father*." He is also called after his *mother*, "Ziad ibn Sommeyya."

A.H. 40-60.

And of Kufa.

ship of Kufa also, and his habit was to spend half the year there and half at Bussorah. A reign of terror now began. At his first address in the Mosque of Kufa, stones were cast at him. To discover the offenders, all present were put to the oath, and some fifty men who refused to swear had their hands cut off. The Alyite faction which reviled Othman abounded in both cities, and strong measures were no doubt needful to repress conspiracy; but cruelty and bloodshed went far beyond the bounds of need. Tales abound of parties refusing to curse the memory of Aly,—one especially, headed by the grandson of the famous Hatim Tay,[1]—being ruthlessly beheaded; and the tyranny thus inaugurated by Ziad casts a dark stain upon his memory.

His severe administration.

And splendid Court.

From Istakhr, Ziad brought with him the pride of an Oriental court. Abroad he was followed by a crowd of silver-sticks and lictors, and at his gate 500 soldiers mounted guard. He was the most powerful Lieutenant the Caliphate yet had seen. The entire East was subject to him. From the Oxus and the Indus to the Persian Gulf his sway was absolute.[2] His sons held important commands in Khorasan and the frontier. One of these carried with him 50,000 citizens of Kufa, whom by a wise policy he planted in Khorasan with their wives and families. Ziad did not long enjoy the splendid position he had thus achieved. Not satisfied with the East, he coveted also charge of the Hejaz with its Holy cities. The inhabitants in terror prayed to the Lord that he might not have it; and so (says our annalist) his hand was smitten with a malignant boil, of which he died.

His death, 53 A.H. 673 A.D.

Progress in the East.

Great progress was made by Muavia in extending his rule eastward. The conquered Peoples and their Chiefs, impatient of the tribute and restraints of Islam, were continually casting off their allegiance; but the yoke was yearly becoming more secure. Herat having rebelled was stormed A.H. 41; and two years later Kabul also was besieged for several months, and taken after the walls had been breached by catapults. Similar operations are noticed against Ghazni, Balkh, Candahar and other strongholds. In the year A.H. 54, one of Ziad's sons, crossing the Oxus and mountain range on camels, took Bokhara; and two years later a son of Othman beat back the Turkish hordes and gained possession of Samarcand and Tirmidz. The territories in the far north and east continued long on a precarious tenure; but in the south all the country up to the banks of the Indus was gradually being consolidated under Mahometan rule or suzerainty.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 422.

[2] He divided the East into four commands, Merve Nisabur, Merve Rudh, Herat, and Badghis.

A.H. 40–60.

Africa.

The experience of Africa along its northern shore did not materially differ from that of the East, for the Berbers were ever and anon rebelling after they had tendered their submission. Indeed, the struggle was harder here, for the Roman settlements enabled the native population to offer a more stubborn resistance. And yet, in the end, the overthrow was not less complete, so that the bright seats of civilisation and of the Christian faith, were soon known only by the ruins of their temples, aqueducts, and civic buildings. Ocba, appointed by Amru A.H. 41, waged war against the Berbers, and for several years the littoral was ravaged as far as Barca and Waddan. In the year 50, strengthened by Muavia with a body of 10,000 Arabs, he founded the settlement of Cairowan, to the south of Tunis, and strongly fortified it against the Berbers. Ever since, it has been regarded as a sacred centre. Tradition tells us of the miraculous flight of wild beasts and reptiles with their young from its site at the conqueror's prayer; and also that the Berbers, convinced by the prodigy, at once accepted Islam and settled themselves upon the spot. But a few years later Ocba was surprised by a joint Roman and Berber army, and driven back on Barca, where he miserably perished with his whole army.

Ocba founds Cairowan, 50 A.H. 670 A.D.

Is defeated and slain.

Hostilities with Greece.

On the side of Armenia and Greece, hostilities, suspended during the contest with Aly, were resumed by Muavia at its close, and we read of a serious defeat sustained by the Greeks, A.H. 42. The Moslem army

A.H. 40-60.

Attack on Constantinople.

wintered in Armenia, and the campaign was prosecuted both by sea and land. In A.H. 50 a formidable expedition was directed against Constantinople. The army suffered severely from want of provisions, and sickness; and Muavia sent his pleasure-loving son Yezid, much against his will, to join the army with large reinforcements. The force landed near Constantinople, the safety of which is ascribed by some to the use of Greek fire, discovered about the time. There was much fighting, and the Moslem loss was heavy. But misfortune notwithstanding, efforts against the City were not abandoned. We read of almost yearly expeditions, and in A.H. 53, an island near Constantinople was seized and held by a Moslem garrison for seven years; but the position was abandoned by Yezid on his father's death.

Death of Abu Ayub and other Companions; also of Ayesha and widows of Mahomet.

In the Grecian campaign a famous Companion, Abu Ayub, was killed under the walls of Constantinople, where his tomb was tended and visited by pilgrims for ages. He was the same who entertained the Prophet in his house for the first half-year after his arrival at Medina.[1] Early memories are also recalled by the death of Arcam, whose abode,—thence called "the house of Islam,"—was the resort of Mahomet and his followers when he first began his teaching at Mecca.[2] About the same time also we read of the death of Ayesha, nearly 70 years of age, and of four other of the "Mothers of the faithful," also thus advanced in years.[3]

A son of Khalid poisoned.

A blot rests on the name of Muavia for compassing the death of Abdul Rahman, son of the great Khalid. The splendour of his father's memory, and his own success in the campaign against the Greeks, invested him with such distinction throughout Syria, as to arouse the fears and jealousy of Muavia, who employed (it is said) a Christian agent to poison him. It is rare to find an imputation of the kind against Muavia, who though backward in checking the cruelty of his lieutenants, was himself on the whole mild and just in his administration.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 164.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 59, 87.

[3] Safia, Joweiria, Omm Salma, and Omm Habîba.

Project of carrying Mahomet's pulpit to Damascus.

In the 50th year of the Hegira, Muavia entertained the project of removing the pulpit and staff of the Prophet from Medina to Damascus, now the capital of Islam. But the impious project was, by divine interposition, checked. For, "on its being touched, the pulpit trembled "fearfully, and the sun was darkened, so that the very "stars shone forth, and the men were terrified at the "prodigies." The fond tradition is significant of the superstitious regard in which everything connected with the Prophet's person was now held. Muavia was dissuaded from his design by the consideration urged upon him, that where the Prophet had placed his pulpit and his staff, there they should remain. And so they were left as relics in the Great mosque hard by the last home of Mahomet.

CHAPTER XLVI

YEZID APPOINTED HEIR-APPARENT. HEREDITARY NOMINATION BECOMES A PRECEDENT

56 A.H. 676 A.D.

Precedents for nomination or election of Caliph.

THE election of a Caliph on each succession had been followed by serious peril to the peace of Islam. The choice was supposed to be a privilege vested in the inhabitants of Medina, "Citizens," as well as "Refugees"; but the practice had been various, and the rule had been oftener broken than observed. The Prophet himself nominated no one. Abu Bekr we may say was chosen by acclamation.[1] He again, on his deathbed, named Omar as successor; and Omar, establishing yet another precedent, placed the choice in the hands of Electors. It is true that on both these last occasions the succession was ratified by the homage of Medina; but that was little more than formal recognition of appointment already made. At the fourth succession, the election of Aly, though carried out under compulsion of the Regicides, resembled somewhat the popular election of the first Caliph. Then followed the rebellion of Talha and Zobeir, based on the allegation that homage had been extorted from them. After that ensued the struggle between Muavia and Aly, which ended in the so-called Arbitration of Duma, and the double Caliphate. On the death of Aly, who declined to nominate a successor, his son Hasan was elected, not, as heretofore, by the people of Medina, but by the Citizens of Kufa. And, finally, we have the first example of abdication, when Hasan resigned his rights into the hands of Muavia, and left him sole Caliph of Islam.

---

[1] Mahomet, as we have seen, appointed him on his deathbed to lead the prayers; but he made no express nomination.

A.H. 56.

Initiative no longer possible at Medina.

Whatever rights Medina may originally have possessed, circumstances had now materially altered the means of exercising them. Abandoned as the seat of government, Medina had practically lost the privilege of choosing a successor to the Throne, or even of confirming the nomination made by others. Succession, as in the case of Hasan, followed necessarily, and at once, upon the death of the reigning Caliph, and Medina had now no choice but to acquiesce in what had already taken place elsewhere. The elective function was thus, from the course of events, transferred to the inhabitants of the seat of Government, wheresoever that might be.

Danger at each succession.

Again, the troubles which followed the election of Aly might recur at any moment. Zobeir and Talha raised the standard of revolt on the plea of compulsion, while between Aly and Muavia there followed a long and doubtful contest. These internecine struggles had imperilled the fortunes of Islam. Not only had the ranks of the Faithful been seriously thinned, but, from without, enemies might have taken dangerous advantage of the strife; as indeed would have been the case in the contest between Aly and Muavia, had the latter not made a truce with the Byzantine Court while civil war impended. But if a similar opportunity again offered, the foes of Islam might not be so forbearing, and a fatal wound might be inflicted on an Empire torn by intestine conflict.

Muavia's design to nominate his son.

Influenced by such considerations, and also no doubt by the desire of maintaining the Caliphate in his own line, Muavia entertained the project of declaring his son, Yezid, to be his Heir-apparent. By securing thus an oath of fealty throughout the Moslem world, he would anticipate and prevent the peril of a contested election. Ziad was favourable to the scheme, but enjoined deliberation, and a cautious canvass throughout the provinces. He also counselled Yezid, who was devoted to the chase and careless of public affairs, to amend his ways in preparation

A.H. 56.

for the Throne, and show before the people a character more fitted for the high dignity in prospect. Moghira likewise was favourable to the project. But it was not till both these counsellors had passed away that Muavia found himself in a position to proceed with the design.

Yezid declared Heir-apparent, 56 A.H. 676 A.D.

So soon as Muavia felt secure of adequate support, and especially that Medina would not resent the invasion of her elective privilege,[1] deputations from all the Provinces and Chief cities presented themselves at Damascus. These, received in state, affected to press the nomination; and accordingly, without further ceremony, the oath of allegiance was taken by all present to Yezid as the next successor. Syria and Irac having without demur tendered homage, Muavia set out for Mecca with a retinue of 1000 horse, ostensibly to perform the lesser Pilgrimage, but in reality to obtain the assent of the two Holy cities to the succession of Yezid. The leading dissentients at Medina were Hosein son of Aly, Abd al Rahman son of Abu Bekr, and the two Abdallahs sons of Omar and Zobeir. Muavia on entering the City received them roughly, and so, to avoid further mortification, these left at once for Mecca. The remainder of the Citizens consented to the nomination of Yezid, and took the oath accordingly. Continuing his journey to Mecca, the Caliph carried himself blandly towards its people for the first few days, which were occupied with the rites of the lesser Pilgrimage. But as his time of departure drew nigh, he stood up to address them on his errand, and though his speech was gilded with assurances that the rights and privileges of the City would be respected, there was at the first no response. Then

Mecca and Medina forced to swear allegiance.

---

[1] When Merwan, governor of the city, placed the matter before the men of Medina, he was at first violently opposed. Amongst others, Abd al Rahman, son of Abu Bekr, said, "This thing is naught but fraud and deception. "In place of election, the right to which vesteth in this City, ye will now "make the succession like unto that of the Greeks and Romans—where one "Heraclius succeedeth another Heraclius." On this, Muavia quoted from the Coran: "Say not unto your parents, *Fie on you!* neither reproach them" (*Sura*, xvii. 24); signifying, it may be, that the very practice of nomination, now opposed, had been introduced by Abu Bekr himself in appointing Omar. Abdallah, son of Omar, is said to have been gained over by the gift of ten thousand golden pieces.

arose Abdallah son of Zobeir, and declared that the recognition of an Heir-apparent would run counter to all the precedents of Islam. On this the Caliph urged the risks to which Islam was ever and anon exposed from a contested succession. Others then spoke thus:—"We consent," they said, "to any one of these three things. "*First*, do as the Prophet did, and leave the election to "the citizens of Medina. Or, *secondly*, do as Abu Bekr "did, and nominate a successor from amongst the Coreish.[1] "Or, *thirdly*, like Omar, appoint Electors who shall, from "amongst themselves, choose a candidate to succeed thee. "Only, like them, thou must exclude thine own sons and "thy father's sons." "As for the first course," replied Muavia, "there is none now left like unto Abu Bekr, that "the people might choose him. And for the rest, verily "I fear the contention and bloodshed that would follow if "the succession be not fixed aforehand." Then finding his arguments of no effect, he called out the bodyguard, and at the point of the sword caused the City to take the oath.

Muavia's action becomes the received precedent of Islam.

The example of Syria, Irac, and the Holy cities was followed throughout the Empire without reserve. And ever after, the precedent more or less prevailed. The fiction of an elective right vested in the whole body of the Faithful, though still observed more or less in form, ceased now to have reality, and the oath of allegiance was without hesitation enforced by the sword against recusants. The reigning Caliph thus proclaimed as his successor the fittest of his sons, the one born of the noblest mother, or otherwise most favoured, or (in default of issue) the best qualified amongst his kinsmen. To him, as Heir-apparent, an anticipatory oath of fealty was taken, first at the seat of Government and then throughout the Empire, and the succession followed as a rule the choice. Sometimes a double nomination was made, anticipating at once thus

---

[1] That the Caliph must be of the Coreishite stock was axiomatic, excepting with the Kharejites, who denounced all privilege. The stricter Kharejites held that there should be no Caliph, but only a Council of State. If there were a Caliph, they were indifferent as to what stock he came from.

A.H. 56. two successions: but such attempt to forestall the distant future too often provoked, instead of preventing, civil war. The practice thus begun by the Omeyadds was followed equally by the Abbassides; and proved a precedent even for later times.

Yezid and his mother. Muavia had other sons, but Yezid's mother, Meisun, was of noble birth, and as such her son took precedence.[1] The story of this lady has special attraction for the early Arab writers. Amid the courtly luxuries of Damascus, she pined for the freedom of the Desert, and gave vent to her longing in verse, of which the following may be taken as a specimen:—

> "The tent fanned by desert breeze is dearer to me than these lofty towers.
> I should ride more joyously on the young camel than on the richly caparisoned steed.
> The wild blast over the sandy plain is sweeter far to me than flourish of royal trumpets.
> A crust in the shade of the Bedouin tent hath better relish than these courtly viands.
> The noble Arab of my tribe is more comely in my sight than the obese and bearded men around me.
> O that I were once again in my desert home! I would not exchange it for all these gorgeous halls."

The lady's verses, coming to Muavia's ears, displeased him. Like Aly, he had become from luxurious living obese and portly, and felt the taunt of his wife, as if aimed at himself. So he dismissed Yezid with his Mother to the tents of her tribe the Beni Kelb, where in boyhood he acquired his Bedouin taste for the chase and a roving life.

---

[1] By Mahometan law, the son of the bondwoman is equally legitimate with the son of the free. But the Arab sentiment of noble birth prevailed; and it still prevails, as we daily see in such petty principalities as Afghanistan.

CHAPTER XLVII

DEATH OF MUAVIA. YEZID SUCCEEDS. HOSEIN AND ZOBEIR. TRAGEDY AT KERBALA. DEATH OF HOSEIN

61 A.H. 680 A.D.

Death of Muavia, vii. 61, April 680.

AFTER a long and prosperous reign, Muavia died about 75 years of age. As he felt the end approach, he brought forth a casket, carefully kept, with parings of the Prophet's nails. Of these, ground fine, he bade them sprinkle the powder in his eyes and mouth when dead, and bury him, for a winding-sheet, in a garment given to him by Mahomet. Fortune had favoured his protracted rule. Since the abdication of Hasan, there had been peace throughout the Empire. Wise, courageous,[1] and forbearing, he held the dangerous elements around him in check; consolidated and extended the already vast area of Islam; and nursed commerce and the arts of peace, so that they greatly flourished in his time. But he looked to the future with anxiety.

Dying caution to Yezid.

The nomination of Yezid as successor was sure to meet with opposition when he was gone. From his deathbed, therefore, he sent a message to Yezid, who was absent at his hunting-place, warning him of the rocks that lay ahead. There were three, he said, whom he must beware

---

[1] His courage, however, was moral rather than physical. Both he and Aly, as already stated, had become obese (at Kufa, Aly went by the nickname of "the pot-bellied"), and in their later years there was little occasion for active bodily exertion. Still, even as late as Siffin, we have seen that Aly fought with his early gallantry; while Muavia shrank from a personal encounter. Aly was, without doubt, the braver of the two in physical courage; but Muavia, beyond comparison, the abler and bolder ruler.

A.H. 61.

Three men to beware of.

of. The two Abdallahs, sons of Omar and Zobeir, and Hosein son of Aly. The first, a pious devotee, would easily be put aside. "As for Hosein," he continued, "the "restless men of Irac will give him no peace till he "attempt the Empire; when thou hast gotten the victory, "deal gently with him, for truly the blood of the Prophet "runneth in his veins. It is Abdallah son of Zobeir that "I fear the most for thee. Fierce as the lion, crafty as "the fox, destroy him root and branch."

Hosein and Abdallah ibn Zobeir escape to Mecca.

The first care of Yezid on assuming the Caliphate was to require those who had before refused to swear allegiance at Medina, now to take the oath. Two of these, the sons of Omar and Abbas,[1] at once complied with the command. But the son of Zobeir, and Hosein, both feigning time for consideration, escaped to Mecca.

Ibn Zobeir dissembles.

Since its capture by Mahomet, no enemy had dared to go up against the Holy city; and there, inviolate as the doves that fluttered around the Temple, conspirators abusing the asylum, were wont to plot against the Empire. As Muavia had foreseen, Abdallah the ambitious son of Zobeir aimed at the Caliphate; but so long as Hosein survived he dissembled, professing to bow to the superior claims of the Prophet's grandson.

Citizens of Kufa invite Hosein thither.

At Kufa, the house of Aly was still after a fashion popular. Hasan, it is true, found little support, during his short-lived Caliphate there; but the fond and fickle populace now turned eagerly to Hosein his brother. Promises of support poured in upon him, if he would but appear at Kufa, and there claim regal rights. His friends at Mecca besought that he would not trust to the slippery missives of that factious City. But the son of Zobeir, to be rid of his rival, fostered the design; and Hosein, yielding to his advice, in an evil hour was tempted to accept the call. His cousin, Muslim, was sent before to prepare the way for his approach.[2] The plot becoming known at

---

[1] Abbas, uncle of the Prophet, and progenitor of the Abbasside dynasty.

[2] Muslim was cousin (once removed) of Aly and grandson of Abu Talib, Mahomet's uncle. The actors in this melancholy chapter have become household names,—words either of love or intensest hate, in the mouths of Moslems, especially of the Shiyas.

Muslim sent in advance, is put to death at Kufa.

court, Yezid deputed Obeidallah son of Ziad, from Bussorah (whose rule there was as stern as had been his father's), to take command at Kufa. On his arrival, search was made, and Muslim was discovered lurking under protection of Hani, a friend to the house of Aly. The populace, suddenly siding with the Pretender, rose on Obeidallah, and besieging him in his Castle, went near to turning the tables against him. The ebullition, however, soon subsided. Obeidallah regained the lead, and Muslim with his protector was put to death.

Hosein sets out for Kufa, 8 xii. 60 A.H. 10 Sept. 680 A.D.

Meanwhile, toward the close of the year A.H. 60, on the first day of Pilgrimage, Hosein, heedless of the remonstrances of faithful friends, started from Mecca with his family and a little band of devoted followers. He had already passed the desert, advancing upon Kufa, when tidings reached him of the fate of Muslim. He was staggered, for it might well have seemed a mad attempt to venture, with the ladies of his household, into that fickle City. It was yet possible to retrace his steps. But Muslim's brethren were clamorous that he should avenge his blood; and there was still the forlorn hope that those who had drawn Hosein by their specious promises thither, would rally round his person so soon as he appeared. But each succeeding messenger was fraught with darker tidings. Farazdac, the poet, chanced to pass that way from Kufa; all that he could say to his princely friend was,—*The heart of the City is with thee; but its sword against thee.* The Bedouins, ever ready for a fray, had been swelling the little band to a considerable force; but now, seeing the cause hopeless, they drew off; and so Hosein, already two or three weeks upon his journey, was left with nothing but his original following of some 30 horse and 40 foot.[1] A Chieftain by the way besought him to divert his course towards the hills of Aja and Selma, "Where," said he, "in ten days' time, 20,000 lances "of the Beni Tay will rally round thee." "How can I,"

---

[1] The number varies; but none places it higher than 40 horse and 100 foot. Seventy heads were brought into Kufa, probably those of all the combatants. The rest were, no doubt, camp-followers, etc.

A.H. 61. replied Hosein, "surrounded as thou seest I am by women "and children, turn aside with them into the desert? I "must needs go forward." And so forward he went to his sad fate. They had not proceeded far when they were met by a troop of Kufan horse under an Arab chief named Horr, who courteously but firmly refused to let him pass. "My orders," he said, "are to bring thee to the Governor; "but if thou will not go, then turn to the right hand, or "turn to the left, as thou choosest, only the way back "again to Mecca, that thou mayest not take." So the little band, leaving Kufa on the right, marched to the left, skirting the desert for a day or two along the western branch of the Euphrates. In so doing, Hosein had apparently no immediate object beyond avoiding attack from Kufa. Horr kept close by, and courteous communications still passed between them.

Met by Horr near Kufa, 1st Moharram, 61 A.H. 1 Oct. 680 A.D.

Stopped by Amr at Kerbala.

But it was dangerous leaving the Pretender to hover about the City already excited by the affair of Muslim. So Obeidallah sent Amr son of Sad with 4000 horse and a second summons.[1] Thus arrested, Hosein pitched his camp on the field of Kerbala on the river bank, five-and-twenty miles above Kufa. At repeated interviews, Hosein disclaimed hostilities, which indeed, with his slender following, and no prospect now of a rising in the City, were out of thought. He would submit, but only thus, he said:—"Suffer me to return to the place from whence I came; "if not, then lead me to Yezid, the Caliph, at Damascus, "and place my hand in his, that I may speak with him "face to face; or, if thou wilt do neither of these things, "then send me far away to the wars, where I shall fight, "the Caliph's faithful soldier, against the enemies of "Islam." But Obeidallah insisted upon unconditional submission; and, to effect this without resort to arms, he ordered Amr to cut off access to the river, hoping that

---

[1] His father Sad was the hero of Cadesiya. The story goes that Obeidallah offered Amr the government of Rei on condition of bringing in Hosein dead or alive. Amr wavered between duty to the grandson of the Prophet and the bribe. He yielded, and for mammon sold his soul. But all this, *cum grano*; for we find tradition now rising to fever heat.

A.H. 61.

Shamir sent to bring him to Kufa, 8th Moharram.

thirst might thus force surrender. But Hosein, who feared the cruel tyrant Obeidallah worse than death, stood firm to his conditions. He even prevailed on Amr to urge that he might be sent direct to the Caliph's court. Well had it been for the Omeyyad house, if the prayer had been agreed to. But impatient of delay, Obeidallah sent instead a heartless creature called Shamir (name never uttered by Moslem lips without a shudder) to say that Amr must dally no longer with Hosein, but, dead or alive, bring him in to Kufa; should Amr hesitate, Shamir was to supersede him in command.[1] Thus forced, Amr forthwith surrounded closely the little camp. Hosein resolved to fight the battle to the bitter end. The scene that followed is still fresh in the Believers' eye; and as often as the fatal day comes round, the 10th of the first month, it is commemorated with the wildest grief and frenzy. Encircled with harrowing detail, it never fails to rouse horror and indignation to the utmost pitch. The fond believer forgets that Hosein, leader of the band, having broken his allegiance, and yielded himself to a treasonable, though impotent, design upon the Throne, was committing an offence that endangered society, and demanded swift suppression. He can see nought but the cruel and ruthless hand that slew with few exceptions all in whose veins flowed their Prophet's sacred blood. And, in truth, the simple story needs no adventitious colouring to touch the heart.

Hosein obtained a day's respite to send his kinsmen

---

[1] Shamir ibn Dzu al Joshan is a name never pronounced by the pious Moslem but with ejaculatory curse. Obeidallah (so the story goes) was at first inclined to concede the prayer of Hosein, as urged by Amr, for a safe-conduct to the Caliph at Damascus, when Shamir stepped forward, and said that Obeidallah, for the credit of his name, must insist on the Pretender's surrender at discretion. So he obtained from Obeidallah a letter to Amr, threatening that if he failed to bring Hosein in, Shamir should take the command, and also obtain the government of Rei in his stead. The name is variously pronounced as Shamir, Shomar, or Shimr.

The whole of the sad tale becomes at this point so intensified, and so overlaid with Alyite fiction, that it is impossible to believe a hundredth part of what the heated imagination of the Shiyites has invented. The names are all ranged, either on one side or on the other (especially with the Shiyas) as models of piety, or as demons of apostasy.

A.H. 61.

Hosein's preparations for defence, 9th Moharram.

and family away. But one and all refused to leave him. The tents were then rudely staked together, and barricades of wood and reeds set round, a poor defence against the overwhelming foe. During the night, Zeinab overheard her Brother's servant furbishing his sword and singing the while snatches of martial verse on the impending combat. Her heart sank at the thought; drawing her mantle around her, she stole in the dark to her Brother's tent, and flinging herself upon him in wild grief, beat her breast and face, and fell into a swoon. Hosein poured water on her temples; but it was little that he could do to comfort her. Aly, Hosein's little son, lay sick of a fever, but they could find no drop of water to slake his parched lips. The women and children passed the night in wailing and in terror.

Attacked and with all his company slain, 10th Moharram, 61 A.H. 10 Oct. 680 A.D.

On the morning of the fatal 10th, Hosein drew out his little band for battle. There was a parley; and again he offered to retire, or be led to the presence of the Caliph. Finding all in vain, he alighted from his camel; and, surrounded by his kinsmen, who stood firm for his defence, resolved to sell life dear. There was a moment of stillness. At length, one shot an arrow from the Kufan side, and, amid the cries of the women and little ones, the unequal fight began. Arrows flew thick, and did their deadly work. Casim, the nephew of Hosein, ten years of age, betrothed to his daughter Fatima, was early struck, and died in his Uncle's arms. One after another the sons and brothers, nephews and cousins of Hosein, fell before the shafts of the enemy. Some took shelter behind the camp. The reeds were set on fire, and the flames spreading to the tents added new horror to the scene. For long none dared attack Hosein, and it was hoped he might even yet surrender. At last, driven by thirst, he sought the river bank. The enemy closed up, and he was cut off from his people. The "cursed" Shamir led the attack. Hosein, struck by an arrow, fell to the ground, and the cavalry trampled on his corpse.

Not one of the band escaped. Fighting bravely, they left of the enemy more than their own number dead upon the field. Two sons of Hosein perished early in the day; and at its close there lay amongst the dead six of his brothers, sons of Aly; two sons of his brother Hasan; and six others, descendants of Abu Talib, Aly's father. The camp was plundered; but no indignity was offered to the survivors, mostly women and children, who were carried, together with the ghastly load of seventy trunkless heads, to Obeidallah's palace. A thrill of horror ran through the crowd when the gory head of the Prophet's grandson was cast at Obeidallah's feet. Hard hearts were melted. As the Governor turned the head roughly over with his staff (though we must be slow to accept the tales of heartless insult multiplied by Shiya hate), an aged voice was heard to cry: "Gently! It is the Prophet's grandson. By the "Lord! I have seen these very lips kissed by the blessed "mouth of Mahomet."

Their heads taken to the Governor.

The sister of Hosein, his two little sons Aly Asghar and Amr, and two daughters, sole survivors of the Family, were treated by Obeidallah with respect, and sent, along with the head of the Pretender, to Yezid at Damascus. Whether sincerely, or to escape the execrations already heaped upon the actors in the tragedy, the Caliph disowned responsibility for the death of Hosein, and reproached Obeidallah for the deed. The ladies and children were honourably received into the Royal household, and sent eventually, with every comfort and consideration, to their Medina home. This destination, meant in kindness by Yezid, turned out badly for the Omeyyad house. At Medina, their return caused a wild outburst of grief and lamentation. Everything around intensified the catastrophe. The deserted dwellings inhabited heretofore by the family and kinsmen of the Prophet, the widowed ladies, the orphaned little ones,—all added pathos to the cruel tale. That tale, heard yearly by groups of weeping pilgrims at the lips of the women and children who survived to tell it,—and coloured, as oft repeated, with fresh and growing horrors,—spread over the Empire. The tragic scene was repeated in every household, and bred pity for the lineage of Aly. It soon was seen that the zeal of

Hosein's family sent to Medina.

Reaction in favour of the house of Aly.

A.H. 61.

Mourning for Hosein.

Obeidallah to suppress the rebellion of Hosein had overshot the mark. The claim of Aly's line to rule, heretofore unknown, or treated only with indifference, now struck deep into the heart of multitudes; and a cloud of indignation began to gather, which ere long burst upon the Dynasty which had caused the sacrilegious massacre. The tragedy of Kerbala decided not only the fate of the Caliphate, but of Mahometan kingdoms long after the Caliphate had waned and disappeared. Who that in the East has seen the wild and passionate grief with which, at each recurring anniversary, the Moslems of every land spend the live-long night, beating their breasts and vociferating unweariedly the frantic cry—*Hasan Hosein! Hasan Hosein!*—in wailing cadence, can fail to recognise the fatal weapon, sharp and double-edged, which the Omeyyad dynasty had thus allowed to fall into the hands of bitter enemies?[1]

The Moharram.

---

[1] In this outburst the name of Hasan is added to that of Hosein, not only because the Shiyas hold him to have been entitled to the Caliphate (though he resigned it), but because he, too, is regarded as a Martyr poisoned by his wife, at the instigation, they say, of Muavia, but (as we have seen) without any sufficient presumption.

The tragedy is yearly represented as a religious ceremony, especially by the Shiyites, in the "Passion Play," throughout which are interwoven, in a supernatural romance, the lives of the early worthies of Islam, ending with the pathetic tale of the Martyr company of Kerbala; while Abu Bekr, Omar, and Othman are execrated as usurpers, and the whole Omeyyad crew, Obeidallah, Hajjâj, etc., are held up to malediction.

CHAPTER XLVIII

REMAINDER OF YEZID'S REIGN. REBELLION OF ZOBEIR

61–64 A.H. 680–683 A.D.

Danger from the Alyite reaction.

YEZID soon felt the evil which the tragedy of Kerbala had inflicted on the Omeyyad throne, and the rebound caused thereby in favour of the house of Aly. Kufa, with proverbial inconsistency, was now eager to espouse the cause of a Dynasty which, over and again, it had cast aside. The Kharejite heresy, in ever-varying form, gained new impetus, especially at Bussorah. Its adherents, repenting of their desertion of Aly after the battle of Siffin, and grieving at the fate of his family, entered into a covenant of revenge and of never-ceasing hostility against the Government. But it was from a different quarter that peril first assailed the Caliphate. It arose, as Muavia had foreshadowed, from Abdallah Ibn Zobeir.

Ibn Zobeir affects the Caliphate, 61 A.H. 680 A.D.

He it was, who, to be rid of Hosein, had encouraged the unfortunate Prince in his desperate venture. No sooner did the sad story reach Arabia than Ibn Zobeir arose and harangued the citizens of Mecca with fierce invective against the ruling Power. Veiling his ambitious design, he began by assuming the modest and pious title of *Protector of the Holy house.* But he soon went beyond this, and before the end of the year commenced to canvass, though at first secretly, as claimant of the Throne. On this reaching the ears of Yezid, he swore that the rebel should yet be brought to Damascus, bound by the neck. Repenting of the oath, though wishing formally to fulfil it and yet leave Ibn Zobeir a way of escape, he sent a

A.H. 61. deputation to Mecca with a silver chain, and a silken dress of honour to conceal it, and invited him so robed to come to court; but Ibn Zobeir scorned the offer and imprisoned the embassy.

Medina rebels, 62 A.H. 682 A.D.

Meanwhile, Medina was in a ferment. The crafty Pretender, still feigning friendship with Yezid, advised him to send a milder governor there, as likely to conciliate the people. Accordingly, Yezid deputed in his place a young and inexperienced relative, who in an evil hour despatched a company of his Chief citizens to Damascus, hoping that they might there be won over by the gifts and promises of the Caliph. They returned munificently rewarded. But, accustomed as they had been to the frugal and pious habits of the Prophet's home, they were shocked at the profane behaviour and indulgent excesses of the Syrians; and brought back such an account of the luxury and ungodliness of the Court,—wine and music, singing men and singing women, cockfighting and hounds,—that the Caliph was at once denounced, and a rival sworn to in his room. The young Governor was fain to fly; the Omeyyad party, 1000 strong, were put in durance, and only allowed to leave the City after swearing that they would not assist the enemy. To chastise these rebellious Citizens, and thereafter proceed to Mecca against Ibn Zobeir, the Caliph despatched a column which, in a bloody battle, defeated the troops of Medina; and the unfortunate City was for three days given up to the licence and rapine of the Syrian army. After forcing the Citizens, at the point of the sword, again to swear allegiance to Yezid, the force continued its march on Mecca.

Is attacked and sacked. End of 63 A.H. 682 A.D.

Siege of Mecca. i. 64 A.H. Sept. 683 A.D.

Ibn Zobeir had nothing effectual to oppose. He was indeed supported by the malcontent fugitives from Medina, and by the Kharejites who from all quarters flocked to the defence of the Holy house. People hardly believed that even the most sacrilegious tyrant would have the hardihood to attack the Sacred places. "Good heavens!" they cried, looking upwards, "will ye fall down upon us!"[1]

---

[1] The exclamation is attributed to Abdal Melik, who with his father Merwan was sent as a deputation by Yezid to Ibn Zobeir, and by him detained

And in like security Ibn Zobeir had probably been the less careful to prepare for his enemy's advance. Early in the year A.H. 64, going forth to oppose the Syrian army, he was driven back with loss. For two months the City was besieged and shot cast into it by the Syrians from the heights around. The Kaaba caught fire and was burned to the ground.[1] And so the siege went on till the third month, when tidings came of the death of Yezid, and thereupon hostilities ceased. So poor at the moment were the prospects of the Omeyyads under the weak son who succeeded Yezid, that the Syrian general offered to swear allegiance to Ibn Zobeir as Caliph if he would but accompany him to Syria, where alone he had any chance of successful candidature. But the "Protector of the Holy house" would not leave his chosen spot. Here he remained to rebuild the Sacred shrine. Though himself a warrior, and the son of one of the most renowned heroes in the Prophet's train, he went out no more into battle, but from his quiet retreat maintained, as rival Caliph, an acknowledged rule, as we shall see in the troubled years that follow, over a large portion of the Moslem empire.

A.H. 61-64.

City bombarded and Kaaba destroyed, iii. 1. 64 A.H. Nov. 683 A.D.

Yezid died in his hunting Castle 40 years of age, after a reign of three and a half years. He is described as a dissipated Monarch, and though the patron of learning, and himself no mean poet, he is only remembered for the tragic scene of Kerbala and sacrilegious attack upon Mecca, and hence his name is ever branded by the faithful with infamy.

Death of Yezid, iii. 64 A.H. Nov. 683.

No progress was made in this reign to extend Islam; on the contrary, as we have seen, there were serious disasters in the north of Africa.

Islam stationary in his reign.

---

in durance; "and yet," adds the annalist, "this same Abdal Melik, when "Caliph, himself sent Hajjâj to besiege the Holy city, cast shot at the Kaaba, "and slay Ibn Zobeir."

[1] Some say that the conflagration originated in the fires kindled around the Kaaba by Ibn Zobeir's own followers. But the weight of authority is the other way. Bokhary tells us that Ibn Zobeir did not attempt to extinguish the conflagration kindled by the naphtha of the engines, but rather used the sight of the ruined Temple to stir up the indignation of his followers.

CHAPTER XLIX

MUAVIA II, MERWAN, AND ABD AL MELIK, CALIPHS. REBELLION OF IBN ZOBEIR AND MUKHTAR; AZRACKITES AND KHAREJITES

64–73 A.H. 683–692 A.D.

Short and feeble reign of Muavia II, iii. 64 A.H. Nov. 683 A.D.

YEZID'S early death was a misfortune to the Omeyyad rule. He was succeeded by his son Muavia II, a weak and sickly youth, who survived but three months. Anticipating his decease, he told the People from the pulpit that, like Abu Bekr, he would have appointed a successor, but there was none he saw of Omar's stamp; that like Omar he would have nominated electors, but neither so did he see any men fit for such a task; and accordingly that he left them to choose a successor for themselves. The short and feeble reign served but to relax the sine wsof the Empire.

Ibn Zobeir's power extends, vii. 64 A.H. March, 684 A.D.

On his death, the Omeyyad counsels were divided, and various aspirants to the throne appeared. Ibn Zobeir, now the acknowledged Caliph at Mecca and Medina, succeeded during the next few months in being recognised ruler also over Egypt and the greater part of Syria. Obeidallah with difficulty escaped from Bussorah, which as well as Kufa went also over to Ibn Zobeir. Persia was in the hands of Kharejites. Syria, and only part even of that, remained under the government of Damascus.

Merwan elected Caliph.

Had Ibn Zobeir left his sanctuary for Syria, there is little doubt but that he would have succeeded, and the Caliphate might then have been established in his family. Even at Damascus, there was a numerous party in his

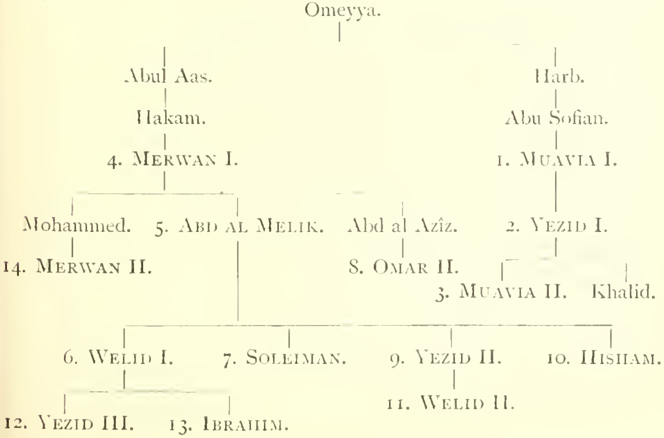
A.H. 64–73.

favour, and most of the strongholds in Syria and Mesopotamia sided with him. But the Syrian army, now returning from Arabia, was staunch to the Omeyyad interest. Dhahhak, governor of Damascus, temporised. The young Caliph had left no child, but there was a brother, a younger son of Yezid, named Khalid. The family favoured him: but the chief men of the Court felt that a stronger hand was needed, and they put forward Merwan. An Omeyyad, he came from another branch, but had rendered devoted service to Othman and to the Dynasty at large.[1] After much dissension, he was saluted Caliph, on condition that Khalid should succeed on reaching man's estate. Dhahhak now showed his colours in the interest of Ibn Zobeir, and retired with his adherents to Merj Rahit, a battle-ground in the vicinity. Merwan led out his army against him, and pitched at Jabia. The Arabs were divided. A strong antagonism was growing up between the two Bedouin branches, the Yemenite or "southern," against the Beni Bekr and the "northern." The former, especially the Beni Kelb, from which the Caliphs had taken wives, were devoted to the Omeyyad house; the Beni Cays and northern tribes were equally prejudiced against it, and joined Dhahhak on the

Opposed by Ibn Zobeir's party.

---

[1] The subjoined tree will show the relationship and descent of the Omeyyad family:—


Omeyya.
Abul Aas.
Harb.
Hakam.
Abu Sofian.
4. Merwan I.
1. Muavia I.
Mohammed.
5. Abd al Melik.
Abd al Azîz.
2. Yezid I.
14. Merwan II.
8. Omar II.
3. Muavia II.
Khalid.
6. Welid I.
7. Soleiman.
9. Yezid II.
10. Hisham.
11. Welid II.
12. Yezid III.
13. Ibrahim.

A.H. 61–73.

side of Ibn Zobeir. Several months passed thus; at last, towards the close of the year, Merwan attacked his enemy at Merj Rahit, and after some weeks of fighting, completely discomfited him, Dhahhak being left dead upon the field. Thereupon all Syria returned to its allegiance. Egypt also was regained; and an army under Musab, brother of Ibn Zobeir, seeking to recover Syria, was put to flight.

Battle of Merj Rahit.

End of 64 A.H. Merwan's death, ix. 65 A.H. April, 683.

In the midst of his success, Merwan came to an ignoble and untimely end. Fearing the stability of his throne, he set aside the recognised arrangement by which Khalid, brother of the late Caliph, should succeed, in favour of his own son Abd al Melik, whom he proclaimed Heir-apparent. Then either with the view of reconciling Khalid's mother, that is, the widow of Yezid, or of weakening her son's claim, he took her himself to wife. Further, he made light of her son, and treated him with indignity. The proud Bedouin dame was offended and took a signal revenge. As the Caliph slept by her side, she smothered him with a pillow, so that he was found dead in his bed. Born at the beginning of the Moslem era, and now over threescore years of age, he had gained an unenviable notoriety as an unscrupulous agent of the faction of Othman, though his demerits have no doubt been magnified by the opposite party. His reign lasted barely a year. He was succeeded by his son Abd al Melik, whose authority was at once recognised throughout Syria and Egypt.

Succeeded by Abd al Melik.

Hostilities in the East between Arabs of the South and North, 46–65 A.H.

It may be useful for a moment to notice events transpiring in the East which illustrate the intense jealousy that reigned between the Southern and Northern divisions of the Arab race, often with serious injury to the State. About this time, the rivalry broke out in Persia into fierce internecine warfare. For a whole year, Ibn Khazim, Ibn Zobeir's governor in Khorasan, fought on the part of the Modhar (or "southern") branch against the Beni Bekr (or "northern"), and in a victory gained at Herat slew 8000 of his foes. His son having been killed by a party of the Temîm tribe commanded by Horeish, fighting was kept up for two years, when that

Chief challenged his adversary to settle their differences by single combat. In a heated conflict, Horeish struck Ibn Khazim a blow which brought the plume of his helmet down upon his face; while he again cut through Horeish's stirrup, who was thus powerless to follow up the advantage. Both retired, and Horeish marched off with his followers towards Merve. Ibn Khazim pursued him; but on meeting, they generously laid aside their enmity and Horeish restored the plume of his adversary to its place. "Thy touch, this day," said Ibn Khazim courteously, "is lighter than thy touch of yesterday." "Heaven forgive me!" replied Horeish, "for had not my "stirrup failed, by the Lord! thy head had gone."

Ibn Khazim and Horeish.

In the following year, Ibn Khazim, still seeking to avenge his son's blood, stormed a fortress in which some eighty of the Beni Bekr had taken refuge. Marvellous tales are related of the feats and prowess of the little band; but their end was to be starved to death. Their chivalry has been handed down in verses by Horeish, which are still preserved. Such are the scenes over which, both in prose and verse, the Arab loves to dwell: and too much prominence may perchance have been given to them by our annalists. But the tribal jealousies and bloody engagements long prevailing amongst the Arab bands in Khorasan and Eastern Persia, serve no doubt to explain why for many years there was so little progress made in the settlement of that territory, and in the extension of the frontier to the North and East.

Arab sympathy with such combats.

On the restoration of peace in Syria, Merwan had despatched an army under Obeidallah to reoccupy Mesopotamia from Mosul downwards, and thereafter advance on Kufa. A second, intended to recover Medina, was routed on its way by the troops of Ibn Zobeir, whose supremacy continued to be recognised throughout Arabia, Irac, and the East. His brave brother Musab continued governor of Bussorah, though exposed there to serious jeopardy from the Kharejites. These at the first rallied round Ibn Zobeir in defence of Mecca against the army of Yezid. But on his laying claim to the Caliphate, they demanded

Complications in Mesopotamia and Arabia.

A.H. 64–73.

Kharejites fall out with Ibn Zobeir.

that he should join with them not only in condemning the "murderers" of Hosein, but also in denouncing Othman as a tyrant justly put to death. This he could not do, without compromising his whole career; for, in company with his father Zobeir, he had waged war with Aly for the avowed purpose of avenging the blood of that unfortunate Caliph. The theocrats, incensed at his refusal, now turned against Ibn Zobeir, whose brother Musab had hard work in opposing them. Over and over again they got possession of Bussorah, and when at last driven out they retired to Ahwaz and spread themselves over Persia. There committing continual ravages under one name or another (for they split up into many sects), they were with difficulty held in check by Mohallab, a brave general who had already distinguished himself in Khorasan, and was now summoned for this task by Musab.

Mukhtar at Kufa. His previous history.

Meanwhile an adventurer of a very different type, named Mukhtar, came on the scene at Kufa. He was son of the Abu Obeid slain in the battle of the Bridge. Designing and unprincipled, Mukhtar was ever ready to take the side most for his own advantage. He was one of those who pursued Hasan when, as Caliph, he fled from Kufa to Medain; and, on the other hand, he took part with Muslim, when deputed by Hosein to Kufa. On the last occasion, he was seized by Obeidallah, then governor of the City, who struck him a blow that lost him an eye. Escaping to Arabia, he swore that he would revenge the injury by cutting the tyrant's body into a thousand pieces. At Mecca he aided Ibn Zobeir in opposing the Syrian attack on the Holy city; but distrusted by him, he departed and set up on his own account. Towards the close of A.H. 64, he returned to Kufa now under one of Ibn Zobeir's lieutenants, and gained a name by joining in the cry of vengeance, raised by the Alyite party, against all who had been concerned in the attack upon Hosein. But, suspected by the Governor of sinister designs, he was seized and cast into prison.

Returns to Kufa, end of 64 A.H. 683 A.D.

For, about this time, a wild fanaticism had seized the Kharejites of Kufa, to revenge the death of Hosein. Ever since the tragedy at Kerbala, a party there had more or less conspired to slay all those who had joined the enemies of their Prophet's grandson. The feeling now became intense. Early in A.H. 65, numbers of "the Penitents," as they called themselves, visited the tomb of Hosein at Kerbala, and gathering there "in a throng thicker than the throng that gathers around the Kaaba," raised a bitter cry, and spent the night in loud wail of self-reproach for having deserted in his extremity the son of Fatima and Aly. Then they set out to attack the godless Syrians. Met near Kirkesia by the Caliph's troops, they fought with desperate bravery, but were utterly defeated, their leaders slain, and the remnant driven back to Kufa.[1]

Kharejite rising at Kufa to revenge death of Hosein, 64 A.H.

The Penitents.

Routed at Kirkesia, iv. 65 A.H. Nov. 684.

Mukhtar from his prison sent to the defeated "Penitents" a fulsome panegyric with hopes of future victory. Having obtained his liberty, he set up as the professed delegate of Mohammed, the Hanefite son of Aly, to execute vengeance on the enemies of his Father's house. By dint of specious assertions, forged letters, and a certain countenance from Mohammed himself then at Medina, he gained over Ibraham ibn al Ashtar,[2] and other influential men of Kufa. By their aid he expelled the governor of Ibn Zobeir, gained possession of the City, and succeeded in extending his sway over Irac and even parts of Persia and Arabia.

Mukhtar gains possession of Kufa as agent of the Hanefite, iii. 66 A.H. Oct. 685 A.D.

His first great effort was directed against his old enemy Obeidallah, who during the past year had been endeavouring to reduce the power of Ibn Zobeir in Mesopotamia, and now threatened Mosul. For this end Mukhtar despatched Ibn al Ashtar with an army; but no sooner had it left Kufa, than the Citizens, many of whom had no sympathy with the Alyite movement, and were indeed themselves amongst the "murderers" of Hosein, rose in rebellion against Mukhtar. He hastily recalled

Mukhtar sends army against Obeidallah, 66 A.H. 686 A.D.

Uproar in Kufa.

---

[1] The wild fanaticism of these people is illustrated by the war-cry of one who thus exhorted his fellows: "Whoso desireth the life after which there is 'no death, the journey after which there is no weariness, the joy after which 'there is no grief, let him draw nigh unto his Lord in this battle, and breathe 'out his soul in Paradise."

[2] Son of the Ashtar who bore so prominent a part on Aly's side in the battle of Siffin.

A.H. 64–73.

Massacre of all concerned in attack on Hosein. End of 66 A.H.

Ibn al Ashtar for his defence. A terrible conflict ensued in the streets of Kufa, tribe against tribe, Yemen against Cays, faction against faction,—till the cry on one side "Down with the murderers of Hosein!" on the other "Down with the murderers of Othman!"—resounded throughout the City. At last, after some 800 had been slain, Mukhtar's party gained the victory. An amnesty was called; but from it all who had taken part against Hosein were shut out. These including,—besides Shamir, Amr, and other leading actors in the tragedy,—no fewer than 284 citizens of lesser note, were ruthlessly put to death. And so Mukhtar at once achieved the ostensible object of his mission, and avenged himself by horrid cruelties upon his enemies.[1] The heads of Amr and of his son, slain after he had given them quarter, were sent to Mohammed the Hanefite, with this message,—"I have destroyed every man within my reach concerned in the attack upon Hosein, thy martyred father; "and I will yet slay the remainder, if the Lord will." Only a few escaped to Bussorah.

Ibn al Ashtar defeats Obeidallah, who is slain, i. 67 A.H. Aug. 686 A.D.

While emeute and slaughter were thus going on, Obeidallah had taken Mosul, and was advancing on Irac. Mukhtar, now that he was rid of his foes at home, hurried off the army under Ibn al Ashtar to meet his arch-enemy. He himself accompanied it a short way, when a scene, worthy of the unprincipled pretender, was enacted to stir the fanatic zeal of the troops. A party of his followers drew near with a worn-out chair borne upon a mule. "The chair of Aly!" cried Mukhtar; "*a messenger from "heaven*[2] sent to slay thousands upon thousands of the "wicked ones; even as the ark brought victory unto the "children of Israel!" "Nay!" cried the pious Ibn al Ashtar, as the crowds with uplifted arms shouted around the chair,—"Call it rather the golden Calf which led the "Israelites astray." The wretched scandal thus countenanced by Mukhtar tended to lower him in the eyes of all the thinking citizens. Meanwhile, with an immense force, Obeidallah was advancing from Mosul, and the Kufan army hurried on to anticipate him before he should invade Irac. The two armies met on the banks of the Zab. But there was treachery in the Syrian camp. The Beni Cays had not forgotten the field of Merj Rahit, and they carried the left wing in a body over to the enemy. Beaten at first by the other wing, Ibn al Ashtar recovered his position; and in a furious charge, nerved by the cry of "vengeance on the tyrant Obeidallah and the murderers "of Hosein!" routed the Syrian force, of which the most that escaped the sword perished in the swift waters of the Zab. The head of Obeidallah was carried to Kufa, and cast before Mukhtar on the very spot where, six years before, as governor of Kufa he had so roughly handled the gory head of the Prophet's grandson.[1] Thus early was the tragedy of Kerbala avenged in the blood of its chief actor, and of almost all who had taken part in it.

---

[1] "Some they stoned, some they stabbed, and some they shot with arrows "like as they had shot at Hosein." Of one, Mukhtar had the four limbs cut off, and the wretched creature so left to die; another, half dead, they burned in the fire. The feeling ran so high as to override the ties of nature; thus the citizen who brought in from Kerbala the head of Hosein was hunted down till at last he was pointed out by the fanatic piety of his own wife and slain.

[2] Quoting the Coran, *Sura* lxxvii. 1.

Battle of the Zab.

Obeidallah's head sent to Kufa.

The victory of Ibn al Ashtar made Mukhtar for the moment undisputed master of Mesopotamia. His fortune, however, built up on a sand-bed of false pretences, was but of short duration. He tried to hold with Ibn Zobeir; but Ibn Zobeir had no faith in him; and to test his profession of loyalty summoned him to Mecca. Mukhtar, refusing, assumed a hostile attitude, and sent a force to succour the Hanefite son of Aly, whose life Ibn Zobeir had threatened unless he would do him homage.[2] He also despatched an army to Medina with the ostensible object of defending it from Syrian attack; but Ibn Zobeir, divining his ambitious designs, sent a force in the same direction which cut it to pieces.

Mukhtar falls out with Zobeir.

---

[1] The feeling of abhorrence towards Obeidallah may be gathered from the tradition that a viper issued from his head and kept crawling from his mouth into his nose, and so backwards and forwards.

[2] Eventually the Hanefite tendered allegiance to Abd al Melik, and we hear little more of him.

A.H. 61-73.

Musab defeats Mukhtar, 67 A.H. 686 A.D.

Musab, brother of Ibn Zobeir, was still Governor of Bussorah. The Kufans who had escaped thither from the tyranny of Mukhtar, now besought Musab to rid them of their adversary. Nothing loth, he summoned the brave Mohallab from Fars, where he was still fighting against the Kharejites; and thus supported, some little time after the battle of the Zab, Musab set out for Kufa with a fully equipped army. He was met on the way by the troops of Mukhtar, whom he totally discomfited. Mukhtar then rallied his adherents in Kufa, and himself at their head encountered the enemy just outside the walls; but he was driven back, and with some 8000 followers forced to take refuge in the Fort. For several months they held out, but with little sympathy from the Citizens at large. At last, driven by hunger and thirst, Mukhtar called on the garrison to go forth with him and fight either for victory or a hero's death. He was followed but by nineteen, and with them met his fate. The rest surrendered at discretion. There was much discussion as to whether these should be spared, or at least those amongst them of Arab blood, who numbered 700.[1] But the army was incensed, and the Citizens of Kufa had no favour for them; and so Musab gave command, and the whole seven or eight thousand were beheaded. It was a deed of enormous ferocity, and brought Musab into well-merited disfavour with his brother Ibn Zobeir. The hand of the Pretender was nailed to the wall of the Mosque, where it remained till taken down by Hajjâj; and the cruelties were crowned by putting to death one of the widows of Mukhtar, who refused to speak otherwise than well of her husband's memory.[2] Thus ended the short-lived triumph of this unprincipled adventurer but a year and a half after his seizure of the City.

Mukhtar slain, ix. 67 A.H. March 687 A.D.

67–69 A.H. 687–8 A.D. Outbreak of Kharejites.

During the next two years there was little change in the relations subsisting between the several provinces. The Kharejites kept the East in constant alarm. They scoured the country, made cruel attacks on the unoffending people,[1] took Rei, besieged Ispahan for months, overran Ahwaz and Kerman, and even threatened Kufa. Mohallab, the only general able to cope with these savage fanatics, had been unwisely withdrawn from the field for the government of Mosul. Musab now again sent him against the Kharejite bands; and after eight months of unceasing warfare he succeeded in dispersing them for the time. The temporary quiet which, apart from these Kharejite outrages, at this period prevailed throughout the Empire is signalised by the singular spectacle chronicled by tradition, that whereas the Meccan solemnities were always headed by the Sovereign himself or by his Lieutenant, there were in the year A.H. 68, four leaders who without any breach of harmony presided at the Pilgrimage, each over his own adherents,—namely, Ibn Zobeir, the Hanefite son of Aly, the Kharejite Najda who held the south of Arabia, and the Deputy of the Caliph himself.

---

[1] It is instructive to observe the distinctive value at this period placed on the life of Arabs, when it was calmly proposed to set the Arab prisoners free and slay the "clients" of foreign blood.

[2] Elegies by different poets mark the horror entertained of this atrocious act.

Pilgrimage xii. 68 A.H. June 688 A.D.

Rebellion of Amr ibn Said, 70 A.H. 689 A.D.

Abd al Melik had for some time been contemplating operations against Ibn Zobeir, and had in fact started on more than one occasion for a campaign to commence in the north of Syria, and sweep down upon Irac and Arabia; but a severe famine paralysed his efforts for a time. At last, in the beginning of the year A.H. 70, he attacked Kirkesia, but was recalled by a danger which threatened his throne, and led to an act which has left an indelible stigma on his name. At the time of Merwan's accession, it was admitted that the minor son of Yezid should have the next claim. A similar expectation was held out, either then or afterwards, to Amr ibn Said, cousin of the Caliph and governor of Damascus. Both expectations were defeated by the succession of Abd al Melik, and the injury rankled in the mind of Amr ibn Said. Accordingly, on the Caliph's camp nearing Aleppo, he left it secretly by night, re-entered Damascus, and set up for himself as Caliph. Abd al Melik

---

[1] These theocratic fanatics seem throughout to have had a strange fascination for the most savage cruelties, regarding them apparently as service to God, if only perpetrated against those held by them as heretics. They even cut up women big with child.

A.H. 64–73.

Treacherously slain by Abd al Melik.

hurried back, and after some inconclusive engagements offered an amnesty, on which the fighting ceased, and a deed of pardon was given to Amr. A few days after, the Caliph, who had resolved on his death, summoned him to his presence. He went against the advice of his friends, clad in armour below his dress, and with a large following, which, however, were shut out at the Palace gates. Accosting him in friendly accents, Abd al Melik bade him sit down by him, and after indifferent conversation, signified that he wished to fulfil an oath he made on first hearing of Amr's rebellion, namely, that he would bind him hand and foot; but that having fulfilled his oath he would afterwards unloose him. Amr submitted, but no sooner was he bound than the Caliph smote him violently, and having bid his brother Abdul Aziz put him to death, went forth to evening prayers. Returning shortly, he was startled to find his victim still alive; and, taunting his brother, who said he had not the heart to do the deed, with cowardice, himself stabbed Amr to death, and then cast his head with a heavy largess to the crowd without. Amr's following was put to flight; his sons and adherents, with difficulty spared, were banished, and peace restored. The Caliph then sent to the widow for the deed of amnesty;—"It is in the grave with my husband," she replied, "that he may arraign thee before his Lord thereby." Abd al Melik was not otherwise a cruel or hard-hearted man; but this act of refined and ruthless treachery created a widespread impression against him at the moment.[1]

Caliph's campaign against Musab, A.H. 71. A.D. 690.

Secure in Syria, Abd al Melik renewed his design against Ibn Zobeir and Musab. There was a strong party in the Caliph's favour at Bussorah; but endeavour through an emissary to stir them into active loyalty having

---

[1] For example, it alarmed the Hanefite son of Aly, and prevented his coming in for a time. The Caliph is represented as rather boasting of it at Kufa: "Beware," he said, "for I have the bonds by me which I cast around "the neck of Amr ibn Said." According to some accounts Amr's rebellion took place somewhat later, on the occasion of the Caliph's setting out for Irac against Musab; but the main outlines otherwise are the same; Amr persisting in his claim, the Caliph felt that his life was not safe, and that either he or Amr must die.

War against Musab,

failed, the Caliph resolved himself to head a force for Mesopotamia and Irac. The Greeks, taking advantage of the divisions in the Moslem empire, pressed heavily at this time on the Syrian frontier; and Abd al Melik, to be free for his enterprise, had to make a truce with them at the weekly tribute of 1000 golden pieces. It was the year A.H. 71 before Abd al Melik again broke ground. Having sown disaffection widely in Kufa and Bussorah by missives promising pardon and rewards, he laid siege to Kirkesia, where Ibn Zobeir's governor shortly accepted the offer of amnesty, and with his son joined the Caliph's army. Musab, now thoroughly alarmed, sought the help of Mohallab, but that general was at the moment hotly engaged with the Kharejites, who were close upon the walls of Bussorah. So he had to meet the Caliph on the Syrian frontier with only Ibn al Ashtar, who, though tempted with the promise of Irac, stood fast by Musab. When the two armies met, it was soon seen that the Caliph's missives had taken effect, and that treachery was rife in Musab's camp. Ibn al Ashtar fell battling bravely; and Musab, deserted by his troops, and refusing quarter, was slain fighting, with his son by his side, a hero to the last. His head, with the nose cut off, was sent round by Abd al Melik to Kufa, Egypt, and Damascus. It was then to have been shown over the cities of Syria, when the Caliph's wife, with better feeling, had it washed and buried. Musab died aged 36. He was handsome and brave; but his memory is stained by the butchery perpetrated by his command at the death of Mukhtar.

Who is slain in battle.

Caliph regains Kufa and Irac.

On Musab's death, the Kufan army swore allegiance to Abd al Melik, as did also the Arab tribes of the Syrian desert. Advancing on Kufa, he encamped by the City forty days. There, one of the Citizens made him a great feast at the ancient palace of Khawarnac,[1] open to all. Abd al Melik was delighted:—"If it would only last!" he said, "but as the poet sang" (and he quoted some verses), "*all is transitory here.*" Then he was taken over

---

[1] For the Palace of Khawarnac, see *Life of Mahomet*, 1st edition, vol. i. p. clxxi.

Khawarnac Palace.

the Palace, and being told of the ancient princes of Hira who lived there, extemporised a couplet (for he was himself a poet), signifying that the world passes away, and but repeats itself.[1] The Caliph was fortunate now in obtaining the adhesion of Mohallab, whom he confirmed in his commission against the Kharejites; and having arranged for the administration of Kufa, Bussorah and the various Eastern posts, returned to Damascus.

Ibn Zobeir at Mecca.

Ibn Zobeir in retirement still held to his claim of the Caliphate. Virtual ruler for several years of the greater part of the Empire, he had remained singularly inactive at Mecca. His chief domestic work had been the restoration of the Holy house destroyed A.H. 64. Having removed the débris, he came upon remains of the ancient limits of the Ishmaelite structure, and enlarged the walls accordingly.[2] Fire, we are told, flashed from the sacred rock when Ibn Zobeir had the temerity to strike the foundation with his pickaxe, as the same terror had overawed the people sixty years before when, in the youth of the Prophet, the Kaaba was dismantled and rebuilt.[3] If instead of remaining inactive at home, and contenting himself with the issue of orders from the Holy city, he had gone forth to head his armies, it seems not improbable that the Caliphate thus usurped might have been established in his line. But the defeat of his brother Musab came upon him as an unlooked-for and fatal blow. He mounted the pulpit when hearing of it, and harangued the people on the treachery of the men of Irac, and his readiness to die in defence of the Kaaba. But trusting perhaps to the immunity of the Sanctuary, he took no further steps.

---

[1] "Be not vexed with care, for thou too shalt pass away:
Therefore enjoy thyself, O man! whilst thou can;
For that which was, shall not be again when it hath passed;
And that which shall be, only as what hath already been."

[2] A tradition is quoted from Ayesha of Mahomet having told her that he would himself have restored the Kaaba to its ancient wider dimensions, but that the people having been so recently reclaimed from idolatry, he feared the effect upon them of appearing to tamper with the sacred edifice. Hajjâj subsequently took the temple down and rebuilt it on its former lines.

[3] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 26 *et seq.*

If such were his thoughts, they were in vain; for after Irac had been reduced, Abd al Melik resolved on putting an end to the pretensions of his rival. He therefore sent a column of horse and foot under Hajjâj, an able officer now coming to the front. Marching from Kufa, Hajjâj reached Tayif in the vicinity of Mecca, without opposition, and forwarded letters of pardon to Ibn Zobeir, if only he would submit. But Ibn Zobeir declined the offer, and marched out with his followers to Arafat (the Mount of pilgrimage), on the road to Tayif. There he was met by Hajjâj and driven back on Mecca. Hajjâj then sought and obtained from the Caliph leave to besiege the Holy city. Men remembered how shocked the same Abd al Melik had been when, eight years before, Mecca was stormed by order of Yezid, and so they said the Caliph had gone back in his religion. But this was hardly fair to him; for so long as Ibn Zobeir remained rival Caliph in that otherwise secure sanctuary, the Empire could not be free from the danger of revolt. It was close upon the month of Pilgrimage when Hajjâj, strengthened by reinforcements from Medina, invested the City and mounted catapults on the surrounding heights. As the engines opened with their shot, the heavens thundered (so tradition goes) and twelve of the Syrian army were struck by lightning; but next day when the storm returned, the impartial thunderbolts fell upon the men of Mecca, an incident from which Hajjâj drew happy augury. During the days of Pilgrimage, the bombardment was at the intercession of Omar's son held over, and the solemnities proper to the season partially performed. The siege was shortly turned into a strict blockade, and in a few months the inhabitants, suffering the extremities of want, began to desert in great numbers to the enemy. Even two of his own sons did so, at Ibn Zobeir's advice; but a third preferred to stay and share his father's fate. The siege had now lasted seven months, when Ibn Zobeir lost heart. He was tempted to give in; but he would first consult his mother, Asma daughter of Abu Bekr, now a hundred years of age. The scene is touching. With the ancient spirit of the Arab

Hajjâj attacks Mecca, v. 72 A.H. Oct. 691 A.D.

Besieges the city, xi. 72 A.H. March 692 A.D.

A.H. 61-73.

Ibn Zobeir dies fighting, vi. 73 A.H. Oct. 692 A.D.

matron, she exhorted her son, if still conscious of the right, to die as a hero should. "That," said he, as he stooped to kiss her forehead, "is what I thought myself; but I wished "to strengthen my thought by thine." And so, putting on his armour, he rushed into the thickest, and fell in the unequal fight. The heads of Ibn Zobeir and two of his leaders were exhibited at Medina, and thence sent on to Damascus. Hajjâj, giving thus early proof of his hard and cruel nature, had the Pretender's body impaled on the outskirts of the Holy city. Abd al Melik blamed him for his inhumanity, and bade him give the body up to Asma, by whose loving hands it was washed and committed to the grave.

Ibn Zobeir and his mother Asma.

Thus ended the rule of Ibn Zobeir, a man of noble but inactive spirit, who for nine years held the title, and much also of the real power, of Caliph. He died aged 72.

His mother, Asma, is the same who, at the Hegira, seventy-three years before, tore off her girdle to bind with it the Prophet's wallet to his camel as he took his flight from the cave of Mount Thaur, and thus earned the historic name of "She of the shreds."[1] It is one of the last links that connect the Prophet with the chequered days on which we have now entered. What a world of events had transpired within the lifetime of this lady!

Ibn Khazim faithful to Ibn Zobeir.

The only one of Ibn Zobeir's governors who remained faithful to his memory was Ibn Khazim, now fighting with the rival clans of Khorasan. Abd al Melik offered if he swore allegiance, to confirm him in Khorasan; but he indignantly rejected the offer. "I would have "slain the Envoy," he said, "had he not been of my own "Caysite blood." But he made him swallow the Caliph's letter. Thereupon Abd al Melik sent him the head of Ibn Zobeir, in order to assure him of his end. Ibn Khazim embalmed the relic, and forwarded it to the family of the deceased. He was shortly after slain in battle by one whose brother he had put to death in the intertribal warfare.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 136.

CHAPTER L

REMAINDER OF ABD AL MELIK'S REIGN. HAJJÂJ; MOHALLAB; REVOLT OF ABD AL RAHMAN

73–86 A.H. 692–705 A.D.

ON the death of Ibn Zobeir, who for thirteen years had held his ground as rival of successive Caliphs, the Omeyyad rule was anew recognised, without dispute, over the whole Moslem realm, and Abd al Melik named as Caliph in the prayers of every Mosque from east to farthest west. He was able at last to turn his arms again towards the north, where the Moslems now obtained material victories over the Greek forces in Asia Minor and also in Armenia; so that apprehension in that direction was for the present at an end. Abd al Melik universally recognised, 73 A.H. 692 A.D.

But throughout the remainder of this reign the leading figure was unquestionably Hajjâj, whose cruelties have stamped him as the worst tyrant of the age. For some time after the sack of Mecca he remained Governor of Arabia. Having removed the unhallowed vestiges of the sacrilegious siege from the precincts of the Kaaba, which was by him restored to its previous dimensions, he visited Medina. There he denounced in no measured terms the City in which Othman had been murdered, and even branded certain of the Citizens, known as hostile to the Omeyyad line, with the mark used for a subject race. Hajjâj governor in Arabia.

In the following year, a branch of the Kharejites called Azrackite,[1] assumed a threatening attitude on the Persian frontier, and the Governor of Irac deputed Mohallab from Azrackite rebels in Irac, 74 A.H. 693 A.D.

---

[1] So called from a leader of the name of Azrack, who flourished some fifteen or twenty years before.

A.H. 73–86.

Khorasan, with heavy contingents from Bussorah and Kufa, again to fight against them. But on the Governor dying shortly after, the troops from both cities began to desert Mohallab and, despite remonstrance, return to their homes. The Caliph now saw that none but a strong hand could curb the licence of the men of Irac, and so Hajjâj was appointed Governor. He forthwith set out from Medina with a small mounted escort, and crossing the desert by forced marches arrived in the early dawn unknown at Kufa. He entered the Mosque as men were assembling for early prayer, and mounting the pulpit sat down, with face concealed behind the folds of his red turban. "To prayers! to prayers!" he cried aloud, and still sat muffled. Some thinking him a Kharejite adventurer, took up stones to cast at him. But they dropped them in terror as, uncovering his stern features, they recognised that it was Hajjâj. In verses full of threat and fury, he upbraided the City for its treachery; "Beware," he said, "for verily it is as if I saw many a head "before me all gory in its blood!" Then he commanded the Caliph's rescript to be read aloud. It opened with the greeting of *Peace*; but there was no response. "Stop!" said Hajjâj in anger, to the reader; "is it come to this, "that ye respond not to the greeting of the Caliph? I will "teach you soon to mend your ways." The affrighted company at once joined in the loyal response, "Peace and blessing on the Caliph!" The letter read, Hajjâj resumed his threatening tone;—"If ye reform not forthwith," he said, "there will soon be widows and orphans enough amongst "you. Unless ye depart within three days for Mohallab's "army, I swear that I will slay every man of you I find "behind." And he was as good as his word. The Citizens streamed day and night across the bridge; but some who failed to hasten their departure, an aged man amongst them, were barbarously put to death. At Bussorah, the same scene, with even increased severity, was enacted. It was emphatically now the reign of terror.[1]

Hajjâj appointed to Irac, 75 A.H. 695 A.D.

His severe administration.

---

[1] Ibn al Athir notices the growing barbarity of public executions. With the early Caliphs, the culprit's turban was simply removed and the head bared

A.H. 73–86.

With the view of encouraging Mohallab in his harassing campaign, Hajjâj with a column from Bussorah encamped in his vicinity. There his troops mutinied for an increase of pay, such as had been given them by Musab; and at one time Hajjâj, refusing it and left almost alone, was in peril of his life. In the end, order was restored, and an amnesty proclaimed. Not many were put to death, but amongst them was the son of Anis, once body-servant of the Prophet, and now an aged citizen of Bussorah.[1] Not content with executing his son, Hajjâj confiscated the possessions of the father also, and on his expostulating covered him with invective. Stung by his reproaches, Anis appealed to the Caliph, who upbraided his Lieutenant in terms of such gross indecency as few but Arabs know how to give, and ordered him on pain of personal chastisement to withdraw his words, and treat Anis with the honour due to one who had in person served the Prophet. Hajjâj, much disconcerted, made the best amend he could. Anis accepted the apology, but added what should have touched the despot more even than the Caliph's reprimand;—"Had a Nazarene, "with all his infidelity, seen one who had served the Son "of Mary but for a single day, truly he had done him "honour, as thou hast not done to me, who served the "Prophet of the Lord for full ten years." It is the last link that connects the pages of tradition with the person of the Prophet.

Hajjâj in jeopardy.

Harsh treatment of Anis, the Prophet's servant.

Though Hajjâj escaped these recent dangers, his Viceroyalty was during the next two or three years seriously disturbed by Kharejites of various shades. Some were dissatisfied with a Government that seemed to trample on the sanctions of Islam, and preferred return to the days of Omar, under a Caliph to be chosen (some still holding to the Coreish, and others not) by the voice of

Kharejite insurrection. Shebib. 76–77 A.H. 695–6 A.D.

---

just as the falchion was about to strike it off. Musab had the hair and beard shaved off; and the victim exposed thus to public derision, was decapitated. Now he was pinioned and often suspended by wedges to the wall, and so struggling, with his hands torn by the nails or hooks, his head was struck off.

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 195–511.

A.H. 73-86.

Kharejites dispersed.

the People at large. The Theocrats, on the other hand, would none of any Caliph,—their cry, as of old, was *No Rule but the Lord's alone*, and a Council to assist. But all were nerved to action by the tyranny of Hajjâj, and by the countenance accorded him by the Caliph. The most dangerous was the latter class. These had no worldly views. As a matter of conscience, they fought with equal bravery whatever the chances of success, goaded by a wild fanaticism. Their leader Shebib, with his few hundreds, put to flight the thousands of Hajjâj. By rapid counter-marches, he outmanœuvred his enemy, and with desperate bravery over and again discomfited the columns which, for two years, were continually sent against him. He repeatedly stormed the walls of Kufa, and on one occasion effecting an entrance, made havoc in the city, and slew many of the worshippers assembled in the Mosque. Abusing the Kufans in his despatches to the Caliph, for their cowardice, Hajjâj was reinforced by a contingent of Syrian troops. With their aid he succeeded at last in dispersing the followers of Shebib, who was drowned by his horse stumbling on a bridge of boats over the river at Ahwaz.[1]

Mohallab's campaign against Azrackites, 76-78 A.H. 695-7 A.D.

Mohallab was still engaged in Persia with Kharejites of the Azrackite sect. Driven out of Fars, they fell back on Kerman, and for a year and a half eluded or defied the Caliph's forces. Their chronic rebellion might have lasted longer, had they not fallen out among themselves, and broken up into parties that were soon effectively dispersed. Thus the Azrackites, having kept Irac and Persia more or less in turmoil for a period of twenty years, were at last put an end to. In recognition of his success, Hajjâj received Mohallab with great honour at Bussorah, and invested him (for as Viceroy he made all appointments in the East) with the government of

---

[1] There is a story that his body was sent to Hajjâj, who had his heart taken out. It was hard as a stone, rebounding when cast on the floor; and within was found a drop of coagulated blood, such as that from which the Coran tells us man was evolved. *Sura* xxii. 5, xcvi. 2; *Ibn Khallican* i. 617. His mother was a Greek captive girl.

A.H. 73-86.

Khorasan. From Merve, Mohallab crossed the Oxus, and with his sons warred for two years against the Turcomans in that direction, who, notwithstanding previous campaigns waged with various success, were yet but partially brought under Moslem influence. He died 82 A.H.; and was at first succeeded by his sons. His services to Islam in the long and obstinate struggle with the Kharejites were great; and the name he left behind singularly fair and unsullied.

His death, 82 A.H. 701 A.D.

Hajjâj was yet to be exposed to another danger: the great King beyond Sejestan, named Ratbil, when attacked drew the Moslem forces into difficult passes of Afghanistan, from which they were allowed to retire only on the payment of a humiliating ransom. To avenge the affront, an army was raised, and equipped at the cost of a heavy war cess on Bussorah and Kufa. The command was unwisely placed in the hands of the ambitious grandson of Ashath, who marched against Ratbil, 80 A.H., put him to flight, and ravaged his land. Mindful, however, of the recent misfortune, Ibn al Ashath (for so he is commonly called) would have held his hand for a time till the country settled down; but Hajjâj, upbraiding him with faint-heartedness, peremptorily bade him to war on; and when expostulated with, threatened supersession. The army, equally with their Commander, resented the action of the "Enemy (as they called him) of God and man"; and, declaring war against both him and his Master, swore allegiance to Ibn al Ashath, who, making favourable terms with Ratbil, forthwith marched on Irac. The Caliph, in alarm, sent reinforcements, which Hajjâj pushed on to the frontier. But Ibn al Ashath beat them back at Toster, and crossing the Tigris, advanced on Bussorah, from which Hajjâj was forced to fly. The rebel entering the City was received with open arms, and at once done homage to as Caliph.[1]

Ibn al Ashath rebels against Hajjâj, 80 A.H. 699 A.D.

Takes Bussorah, 81 A.H.

---

[1] The reason assigned for this sudden acceptance of the Pretender is singular, and is illustrative of the progress of Islam in Irac. Hajjâj, finding that the Jewish and Christian cultivators, to escape the *Jizia* or capitation-tax, embraced Islam and flocked in crowds to the cities, so that the revenues were

A.H. 73-86.

Campaign against Ibn al Ashath, 82 A.H.

Early in the following year, Hajjâj, having entrenched himself outside the City, gained a victory over Ibn al Ashath, who thereupon fell back on Kufa, where he was received with the same readiness as he had been at Bussorah. The latter City being now at his mercy, Hajjâj took a signal revenge by treacherously slaying (so we are told) 11,000 of the inhabitants after promising them quarter. Meanwhile crowds of the discontented Citizens streamed forth to Ibn al Ashath, who was able once more to meet Hajjâj, half-way between the two cities, with 100,000 men. The Caliph was now so alarmed that he offered terms to the rebels by the hand of his son and brother. Hajjâj was to be superseded, and suitable provision made for Ibn al Ashath. Hajjâj remonstrated with the Caliph, reminding him of Othman's fate, but he was firm. Ibn al Ashath was inclined to accept the offer; but his army rejected it with scorn, and prepared for battle.

Who is beaten, vi. 83 A.H.

Several months were spent in skirmishing and single combats; and it was not till the middle of A.H. 83 that a great battle was fought. The leader of the Ghazies,—the *Coran-Readers* of the day, and mainstay of the rebels,—falling early in the fight, his followers fled in dismay, and the army, thus disheartened, was totally discomfited. Ibn al Ashath retired hastily to Bussorah, and was there joined by many followers, who, though an amnesty was proclaimed, covenanted to fight under him to the death. Pursued by Hajjâj, he was again beaten in a heavy engagement on the Persian border, and thence effected his escape to Kerman. Eventually he took refuge with Ratbil, who a year or two afterwards, under pressure, put him to death, and sent his head to Hajjâj.

His death, 85 A.H.

In his flight Ibn al Ashath had been followed to the

---

from this cause seriously depressed, ordered his governors to send all such back to their villages and farms, and to take the tax from them as before. There was, in consequence, great lamentation among these village refugees, who went about crying, *O Mahomet! O Mahomet!* and knew not whither to go. The population were deeply touched at their lamentations, especially the "Coran-Readers"; and this was one of the reasons, we are told, which led to the sudden acquiescence of Bussorah in the revolt against Hajjâj and the Caliph.

Yezid, son of Mohallab, 83 A.H.

Superseded by Coteiba.

East by some 60,000 of his defeated troops,—who either hating Hajjâj, or too deeply compromised in rebellion, refused the amnesty. These, failing to induce Ibn al Ashath to leave his protector and again try the fortune of war, set out on their own behalf, and took possession of Herat. Yezid, son of Mohallab, governor at Merve, ordered them to evacuate the place and move elsewhere; but choosing rather to fight, they were by him defeated and dispersed. Many were taken prisoners, and those of note sent to Hajjâj, who, both now and after the recent engagements in Irac, shed the blood of his captives with unsparing hand and heartless cruelty. He was on this occasion vexed with Yezid for having pardoned some leading men, because, as he suspected, they were of Yemen blood, while he himself was partial to the Caysite clan; and this is assigned as the reason for his shortly after superseding Yezid and his brothers by the famous Coteiba.

Wasit founded, 83 A.H. 702 A.D.

In this year the military station of Wasit was founded, so called, as midway between Kufa and Bussorah. The main object was, no doubt, to have an independent cantonment holding in check both restless cities. The immediate cause, however, was impatience of the Kufans at the licence of the Syrian soldiers quartered in their City,—an evil precedent attributed to Hajjâj. Conveniently situated in the well-watered plain betwixt the Tigris and Euphrates, Wasit became the chief military centre of the Empire, and so continued as long as the Caliphate itself.

Hostilities with Greece, 73–84 A.H. 692–703 A.D.

While these events were passing in the east, Abd al Melik was able after the fall of Ibn Zobeir, to throw aside the humiliating treaty concluded with the Emperor; and from the year A.H. 73, his Generals, some of them his own sons, prosecuted with vigour, but not always with success, yearly campaigns in Asia Minor, Armenia, and the coast of Africa. Up to A.H. 76, the relations between the two Courts were friendly; but then a singular incident broke he peace. The Caliph, according to Moslem habit, headed a letter to the Emperor with mention of the Prophet, and the verse "*Say He is God alone*"; on eceipt of which, the Emperor threatened that if such

A.H. 73–86.

Mint of Damascus.

affront were repeated, he would strike coins with words respecting Mahomet grievous to his followers. Heretofore the Byzantine mint, maintaining the old Persian coinage, had supplied the currency in common use throughout the Empire. The Emperor's hostile threat now caused Abd al Melik to establish a royal mint at Damascus, where silver dirhems and golden dinars were coined with a Moslem legend.[1] The amity of the two Courts thus rudely broken, war was prosecuted vigorously. Its fortune varied. In 79 A.H., Antioch was seized by the Greeks for a time; and under Justinian severe reverses were inflicted on the Moslems. On the other hand, the latter took many strongholds in Asia Minor, and penetrated as far as Erzerum. The people on the border-lands of Syria and Armenia suffered greatly in this chronic warfare; and in 84 A.H., so many churches were set on fire that the year was called "The year of burning."

Reverses in Africa, 62–69 A.H. 681–688 A.D.

With even greater energy, but more chequered fortune, the Moslem forces were engaged in Africa. Ocba pushed his armies from Cairowan to the verge of the Atlantic. At Tangier he heard from Count Julian a tempting account of the prize that lay across the strait; but the attempt on the Spanish coast was not to be just yet. The Berbers were treated as an inferior race; and Koseila, one of their chiefs who had embraced Islam, was embittered by being put to some menial office. Carrying his countrymen with him, and joining the Greeks, this rebel advanced with an overwhelming force against Ocba, who was slain, and his whole army destroyed. Koseila thereupon reoccupied Cairowan, but entered into an agreement to respect the Moslem families (now his co-religionists) settled there. Most of the Arabs then retired to Egypt, and it was not till 69 A.H. that anything further was attempted. In that year, Abd al Melik sent an army under Zoheir, one of Ocba's old commanders; who in a great battle, having slain Koseila, beat both the Greeks and Berbers. But these, reinforced by sea from Sicily, again advancing, took Zoheir unawares, and cut his entire force to pieces.

---

[1] Weil, guided by discovery of Moslem coins prior to this reign, relates this incident somewhat differently from our Arab authorities. It is no doubt true that we find silver coins struck by Omar in the old Persian mints with short sentences as "Praise be to the Lord," etc.: and this went on, more or less, throughout the reign of Muavia, who struck golden coins with the design of a sword. It may be true, also, that local governors coined Moslem money before this reign. But notwithstanding, the Greek and old Persian currencies held their ground throughout the Empire until now. It was not till this reign, as we are distinctly told by Arabian writers, that the Mussulman coinage became trustworthy either in weight or touch. The mintage of Hajjâj was held the purest even by Abbasside Caliphs; but the pietists objected to its use, because it had as its legend a verse of the Coran, which might fall into the hands of the infidel, or of Moslems ritually unclean. For the defect of a single grain, each of the 100 workmen now employed in the mint received 100 stripes; making thus, we are told, "10,000 stripes for a single grain." Ibn al Athir's chapter on this subject contains some curious details on the new coinage, vol. iv. p. 337.

Reverses in Africa.

Conquests in West Africa, 74 A.H. 693 A.D.

Such repeated calamities were sorely felt at Damascus; but some years elapsed before steps could be taken to restore the prestige of the Moslem arms. At last, in 74 A.H., an army "greater than ever before had entered the land of Africa," was despatched under command of Hassan. From Cairowan they marched to Carthage, and put to flight the Greeks and Berbers massed in great numbers for its defence. Then they stormed the city,—the inhabitants escaping as best they could by sea to Sicily and Spain,—took much booty, and prisoners without number; and having destroyed many of the Roman buildings, and ravaged the country far and near, returned to Cairowan. But good fortune had not yet dawned on African adventure. A "Priestess" wielding a mysterious influence ad succeeded Koseila: and she, inspiring the Berbers vith new courage, inflicted signal defeat on Hassan, who vas driven back on Barca, and there for five years forced o remain inactive.[1] Then, reinforced by the Caliph, he verthrew the Priestess, who was slain in the fight. hereupon, her sons, with 12,000 of their army, joined the oslem force, which then reoccupied Cairowan. Islam ow spread rapidly amongst the natives. Hassan reained in command till 89 A.H., when he was superseded y Musa, of whom we shall hear more anon.

---

[1] He fortified the place, and "The Castles of Hassan," says Ibn al Athir, are known by his name to the present day."

A.H. 73-86.

Musa, Ibn Khazim's career in Khorasan.

The progress of the Moslem power during this Caliphate in the far East and beyond the Oxus, was paralysed for a time by the continued jealousies and discord of the Arab tribes that formed its garrison. The story of Musa, son of Ibn Khazim, illustrates both this feeling and the relation in which the independent or protected States beyond the frontier stood towards the Moslem Court. Ibn Khazim, it will be remembered, having put many of the Beni Temîm to death, was deserted by his followers, and returning to Nisapur, sent Musa to save his property at Merve, and place it in some stronghold across the Oxus. This he did with a following of one or two hundred mounted men. The Prince of Bokhara, and other chiefs whom he approached, refused to meet him; but Tarkhun, king of Samarcand, received him into friendship. One of his followers, however, having killed a Turcoman, he was obliged to fly to Tirmidz, where, treated kindly by the Chief, he took advantage of a feast to seize his fortress. Established there, the soldiers who had served under his father flocked to him, and refugees also from Kabul and Herat, to the number of some 8000. With their aid, Musa beat back not only the Turcomans, but the Moslem columns sent from Merve to dislodge him. Thus prospering, his followers pressed him to recross the river, and take possession of Khorasan. But he was content with the country beyond the Oxus, and with expelling the provincial Residents sent from Merve. Mohallab, and after him his sons, thought best to leave him alone; and so for fifteen years Musa was undisputed Ruler of this great tract. At last, one of Mohallab's sons, thinking to please Hajjâj, sent an army against him, which was joined by 15,000 of Tarkhun's Turks; and by these, after a long siege, Musa was defeated and slain, 85 A.H. But so inveterate were the tribal leanings of Hajjâj—(who, as we have lately seen, was vexed at Yezid having spared some of Ibn al Ashath's followers because they were of Yemen blood), that he was little pleased with tidings of the death of Musa. "I bade Yezid," he said, "to slay the "Yemenite, and he replied that he had given him quarter;

Defeated and slain, 85 A.H.

"and now his brother hastens to tell me of the death of "this noble Caysite, Musa son of Ibn Khazim, as if, instead "of grieving, that would rejoice my heart!" So strong was the clannish jealousy and party spirit of the Arab race.

A.H. 73–86.

Welid proclaimed Heir-apparent, 85 A.H. 704 A.D.

Abd al Aziz, brother of the Caliph, who had long been Governor of Egypt, held the next title to the throne, having been nominated by his father Merwan. Abd al Melik now sought to set his claim aside in favour of his own son Welid, and was supported in his desire by Hajjâj. But Abd al Aziz would not surrender his right; nor would he agree to the nomination of Welid even as his own successor;—"For," said he, "do not I see in mine own son "what thou seest in thine? Besides, we know not which "of us may die the first; leave it therefore thus alone." The event anticipated did occur, for next year Abd al Aziz died; and Welid was then done homage to as next the Throne, throughout the Empire. The only opposition was at Medina, where a recusant, affirming the old doctrine of popular election, demurred even under threat of the sword, to the declaration of an Heir-apparent. The Caliph, however, contented himself with inflicting stripes upon the malcontent.

Abd al Melik dies, 86 A.H. 705 A.D.

In the following year Abd al Melik died, 60 years of age, having reigned 21 years, during the first portion of which, however, his title was disputed by Ibn Zobeir. From his deathbed he enjoined on his sons mildness and concord, and bade them make much of Hajjâj;—"For," said the dying Caliph, "it is he that hath made our name to be "named in every pulpit throughout Islam, and subdued "our enemies under us." He was buried at the Jabia Gate of Damascus.

His character.

Of Abd al Melik the Arabian historian says:—He was the first Caliph that resorted to treacherous execution, as in the case of Amr ibn Said; the first to conduct the exchequer in Arabic instead of Persian; the first to prohibit men talking in the Caliph's presence; the first to play the miser; the first to declare, as on the death of Ibn Zobeir, "Let no one enjoin equity and the fear of God upon me, "or I will strike his head from off his shoulders." But if

A.H. 73-86.

Abd al Melik's character,

such things were really spoken of him, we must attribute it in great part to the prejudice of Abbasside writers, and to the odium naturally attaching to his siege of the Holy city and the destruction of the Kaaba. Apart from the case of Amr ibn Said, we are told of nothing in his personal control inconsistent with a wise, mild, and just administration; although, by the support accorded to Hajjâj, he must undoubtedly be held responsible, at second hand, for the cruelty and injustice of his Lieutenant. The charge of penuriousness, too, appears equally unfounded; for at least in one respect he was lavish. Himself a composer of no mean merit, he encouraged Poets by a princely liberality. Many stories are told of literary contests held before him by such bards as Jerir, Farazdac, Kotheir, and Akhtal the Christian, and of the largesses conferred on such occasions. Of niggardliness in any branch of the administration, no instance has been given.

And successful reign.

Upon the whole, the verdict on Abd al Melik must be in his favour. His life was a stormy one. As a boy he witnessed the tumultuous scenes at Medina ending in the outrage on Othman's life,—scenes, as we know from his addresses to the inhabitants of that City, which made a lasting impression on him. He was early employed in the affairs of Mecca, and accompanied his father Merwan thither in the negotiations held with Ibn Zobeir. During the first half of his reign, the throne was often in jeopardy, and a coalition of his adversaries would probably have overthrown it. Yet, with but one exception, we never hear of his being betrayed into acts of bitterness and retaliation: on the contrary, before resorting to extremities, he repeatedly made offers of pardon and reconciliation. In the end, having triumphed over all his enemies, he left to his sons a splendid inheritance, and with it the ample and ready means for extending the kingdom on every side.[1]

---

[1] He had fifteen sons by eight wives, besides slave-girls. Four of his sons, as we shall see, succeeded to the throne.

CHAPTER LI

CALIPHATE OF WELID. CONQUESTS IN CENTRAL ASIA, SIND, ASIA MINOR, AFRICA, SPAIN. DEATH OF HAJJÂJ

86–96 A.H. 705–715 A.D.

Welid, 86 A.H. 705 A.D.

HAVING performed the funeral service over his father's grave, Welid returned to the Great mosque of Damascus, and ascending the pulpit, delivered an address lamenting the loss of his father and blessing his memory.

Omar beautifies the Holy cities.

Welid, reposing the same trust as his father in Hajjâj, maintained him in the Viceroyalty of the East. But Arabia he made over to his cousin, the pious Omar, son of Abd al Aziz, under whom, for several years, Mecca and Medina enjoyed a mild and beneficent administration. Aided by a council of learned Citizens, his government of Medina was also popular. He beautified and enlarged the Mosque by embracing within its court the apartments of the Prophet's wives, and others originally built around it. Artificers were furnished by Syria; and the Emperor, informed of the pious undertaking, sent a gift of gold, forty camel-loads of mosaics, and 100 Byzantine masons.[1] Under Welid's instructions, Omar also had the roads and passes on the Pilgrim routes made easy, wells dug about the desert stations, and fountains to play at Mecca and

---

[1] The Emperor presented 100,000 mithcals of gold. It all reads somewhat oddly immediately after the following:—"In the same year, Maslama, the "Caliph's brother, warred against the Greeks, took three fortresses, one being "the *Fort of Constantine*, and slew of the mongrel Arabs 1000, carrying off "at the same time heavy spoil." But we are also told that in the year 90 A.H. (708 A.D.) the Moslem admiral was taken prisoner, and as a matter of grace restored to the Caliph.

A.H. 86-96.

Medina.[1] It was all for Omar a labour of love; and so well did he carry out these useful and ornamental works, that the Caliph, some time after, when on pilgrimage to the Holy cities, expressed his delight and thankfulness at all he saw.

Severity of Hajjâj.

The attractions of Omar's beneficent rule drew away from the heavy hand of Hajjâj great numbers of the men of Irac, who in Mecca and Medina thus escaped his tyranny. This irritated Hajjâj all the more, and Omar felt bound to inform the Caliph of his increasing severity. Hajjâj, on the other hand, complained bitterly of the shelter given to his malcontent subjects in the Holy cities; and Welid, yielding to Hajjâj, recalled Omar. In his room, separate Governors were appointed to Mecca and Medina, who ruthlessly expelled the immigrants, and threatened with death any Citizen who dared to give them shelter. One of such refugees, Ibn Jobeir, who had been paymaster of Ibn al Ashath's army, was after an affecting interview with his family, executed with heartless cruelty by Hajjâj. This was a couple of years before his own death, and remorse for it affected his mind. At night he would awake with the vision of his victim clutching the bedclothes, and crying out, *O Enemy of the Lord, for what hast thou slain me?* whereupon the wretched man would keep calling aloud, *What have I to do with thee, thou son of Jobeir!*

Yezid ibn Mohallab escapes from him to Soleiman, 90 A.H.

His treatment of Yezid and his brothers, sons of Mohallab, was equally cruel and vindictive. Against these, it will be remembered, Hajjâj had a grudge on account of their Yemenite leanings. They were now imprisoned on the convenient charge against retiring Governors, of embezzlement. Having to set out on a campaign against the Kurds, he took them with his camp, under a Syrian guard. Yezid was subjected to torture, which he bore with fortitude; but on one occasion the instrument of torture pierced his leg, and he cried aloud. His sister, one of Hajjâj's wives, alarmed at the cry, screamed, whereupon the tyrant divorced her on the spot. The prisoners were fortunate enough to effect their escape; and Hajjâj, thinking they had fled to Khorasan, warned Coteiba of the danger. But they had taken horse in the opposite direction, and found refuge with Soleiman, the Caliph's brother. Hajjâj was instant with the Caliph that Yezid should be delivered up; whereupon Soleiman sent him, and his own son with him, to Damascus, both in chains, with a letter supplicating mercy. Welid, touched at the sight, let them depart in peace, and forbade Hajjâj to interfere. Yezid continued to live with the Heir-apparent as his intimate and, as we shall see hereafter, favourite courtier.[1]

---

[1] There was need of some such supply at Mecca, for the multitude of pilgrims was now so great that in a dry season the water fell altogether short. In fact, one year the want was so pressing that Omar bade the people join him in prayer; and shortly after rain fell in such torrents that the City was inundated. Such pious traits of Omar are a popular subject with the traditionists.

The Governor succeeding Omar was profane enough to praise Welid at the expense of Abraham,—the former having brought sweet water into Mecca, whereas Abraham only gave them the brackish well of Zemzem.

Escape of Yezid.

During the remainder of his life we do not hear much of Hajjâj, and it was well for him that he died before Welid, for he had given mortal offence to Soleiman, whose right of succession Welid desired to set aside in favour of his son, and the design was encouraged by Hajjâj. But the wrath of Soleiman, though escaped by the father, fell, as we shall see, with terrible severity on his family and adherents. Hajjâj stands out in the annals of Islam as the incarnation of cruelty. But the Caliphate owed much to him. For twenty years the absolute Ruler of the East in times of trouble and danger, with anarchy abroad, perversity and fickleness at home, rebellion and wild fanaticism at his doors, Hajjâj, by his bravery and resolution, maintained the strength and restored the prosperity of the empire in Irac, Arabia, and Khorasan. Severity was no doubt often justified in quelling the turbulent elements around; but nothing can excuse the enormous bloodshed and inhumanity which have handed down his name as that of one of the cruellest tyrants the world has ever seen.[2]

Death of Hajjâj, 95 A.H. 713 A.D.

---

[1] Soleiman was so much attached to Yezid that whenever he received some special rarity, or beautiful slave-girl, he would send them to his friend.

[2] Tradition puts the number of lives sacrificed by Hajjâj (apart from car-

A.H. 86–96.

Wars of Coteiba in Khorasan, 86–96 A.H. 705–714 A.D.

An indirect advantage has by some been attributed to the tyranny of Hajjâj, in that his reign of terror drove many from their homes to swell the armies in the field, and so help forward the conquests for which the Caliphate of Welid is famous. A brief outline of these will now be given, beginning with the campaign of Coteiba in Central Asia. That great warrior advanced every summer into the provinces beyond the Oxus, retiring as autumn advanced to winter in Merve. Up to this time the Moslem campaigns appear to have been of the nature of *razzias*, or raids, bringing the subdued lands into the category of allied, protected, or tributary, rather than of conquered and subject, States. The proceedings were now of a more permanent nature. Coteiba's first advance was against Balkh, Takharistan, and Ferghana. At Balkh, among the captives, was the wife of Barmek a physician, who was taken as a slave-girl into the harem of Abdallah, Coteiba's brother. Soon after, peace being made, the lady, as a matter of grace, was restored to her husband; but the result of the short union with Abdallah was a son, acknowledged by him, and known in after-days as Khalid the Barmecide.[1] The next campaign was against Peikund, a trading emporium of Bokhara, beyond the Oxus. The Turcomans of Soghd and other hordes swarmed in such multitudes around Coteiba for the defence of this rich City, as to cut off his communications. For two months Hajjâj received no tidings, and had prayers offered up for him in the Mosques throughout the East. At last the City fell. The fighting men were put to the sword, their

87 A.H.

---

nage on the field of battle) at 120,000,—mere guess-work of course. He was fond of making copies of the Coran with his own hand, and as a work of merit making distribution of them; but he was bitterly opposed to Ibn Masud's text,—declaring that he would behead anyone who followed it. Many savage sayings are attributed to him. The odium attaching to his name has no doubt magnified his demerits, which, however, with every allowance for exaggeration, were pre-eminently bad.

[1] Weil thinks the story was invented to give the Barmecide family a status they would not otherwise have had as mere natives of Balkh. There is, however, nothing unlikely in the incident. It was altogether in accord with law and habit, only in this case the lady was given back,—an act which, even with the dishonour, must be regarded as merciful in a Moslem conqueror.

families taken captive, and vast stores of gold and silver vessels with other precious things, "spoil such as never before seen in Khorasan," became the Conqueror's prize. In 88 A.H. another advance was made on Bokhara, and many places of note were taken. A heavy battle was fought with a vast host from Soghd and the surrounding districts, commanded by "a nephew of the Emperor of China," who after a determined resistance was put to flight. Next year, Coteiba again advanced through Soghd and Kish, against Werdan, king of Bokhara, who after two days' fighting took to flight; but the City resisting every attempt, was left unstormed. Hajjâj upbraided Coteiba with the failure, and bade him renew the attack on a plan furnished to him of the defences. This he did with a strong force, which mainly through the bravery of the Beni Temîm (for the Beni Azd at first gave way before the fierce onset of the Turks),[1] routed the enemy. Bokhara thus taken, the surrounding province was completely subdued.

Bokhara taken, 88 A.H.

89 A.H.

90 A.H.

On the approach of winter, the Moslem troops being withdrawn for the season, Nezak minister of the Prince of Takharistan, formed a conspiracy with the surrounding powers to cast off the foreign yoke too evidently now settling down heavily upon them. To prevent his Sovereign, who opposed the design, from interfering, and yet give an appearance of respect, he placed links of gold upon him. He then expelled the Resident,[2] and proceeded to enlist against Islam the Potentates all around, from Balkh as far as Kabul.[3] Beyond posting a column under his brother, to guard the frontier, Coteiba could do nothing to oppose this combination till the following year, when, largely reinforced from Persia, he again broke ground.

Rising in Takharistan, 91 A.H.

---

[1] The Moslem women from the camp rushed out screaming at the retreating column, and, beating their horses on their heads, forced them back upon the enemy. So even in these advanced and exposed campaigns we see that the Moslems carried their women and families with them.

[2] The *Amil* or "Agent" of Coteiba:—the "Resident or Representative" of the Caliph or of his Viceroy, to enforce Moslem supremacy in this transitional period.

[3] The countries named as furnishing help and joining in the rising, are—Asbahbâdh, Badhân, Merve-rudh, Talicân, Faryâb, and Juzajân.

A.H. 86-96.

Rising in the East.

Carrying all before him, he found Nezak strongly posted in Khulm, at the entrance of a pass guarded by a fort. Bribing a deserter, he was shown a route to turn the pass, and so fell upon the rear of the enemy, who effected escape across the valley of Ferghana. Here Nezak was again taken in a defile guarded on one hand by Coteiba and on the other by his brother. Thus hemmed in for months, he suffered the extremity of want. But the season again forcing a return to winter quarters, Coteiba, unwilling to leave Nezak still abroad, beguiled him into his camp with promise of safe-conduct. Reporting the capture to Hajjâj, he asked for leave to put him to death. After a long delay permission came; and so, with 700 of his followers,[1] Nezak was slain and his head sent to Hajjâj. The Prince of Takharistan was with his retinue sent to Damascus, where he was kept till Welid's decease. The perfidy of Coteiba towards Nezak was so gross, that the Moslem public, though not unused to guile in war, was scandalised, and upbraided him for it. Another painful, but less inexcusable, incident occurred about the same time. On Nezak's defeat, the king of Juzajân, a member of the coalition, sought terms of peace, which being granted, Coteiba invited him to his camp, sending one Habib as a hostage, and taking hostages in return. The king died while in Coteiba's camp; and his subjects, suspecting foul play, put Habib to death; upon which Coteiba retaliated by slaying the native hostages to a man. Having pushed his conquests still further into Soghdiana,[2] Coteiba returned by Bokhara to Merve. Next year he proceeded to Sejestan against Ratbil, but was set free by the conclusion of peace with that Potentate.

92 A.H.

---

[1] Some traditions say 12,000; but these reports must be taken *cum grano*. The popular voice ran strongly against Coteiba's treachery, and would be inclined to exaggerate.

[2] The King of Shoman had expelled the Moslem Resident, thinking his fortress impregnable. It was stormed by catapults, which must have been very effective, as the missives entered the king's chamber. Kish and Nusaf were overrun; Faryâb offering opposition, was ravaged and set on fire, so that it was called "the burned land." The males were all put to death, and the women taken captive.

A.H. 86–96.

Campaign against Samarcand, 93 A.H.

In 93 A.H. Coteiba again crossed the Oxus, and marched on Khowarizm, the Shah having offered him 10,000 cattle if he would deliver him from a rebellious brother. The rebels were routed, and 4000 prisoners put to death. The brother and his followers were made over to the Shah, who slew them and conferred their property on Coteiba, who was now recalled by the news that Samarcand had thrown off the Moslem yoke. Making a rapid descent upon it, Coteiba thus in a speech addressed his troops:—"The "wretched Soghdians are verily fallen into our hands; "they have broken their treaty with us, as ye have heard; "and truly the Lord will deliver Khowarizm and Soghd "unto us, even as He delivered the Beni Coreitza and "Nadir into the hands of the Prophet."[1] The City held out long, and engines had to be brought up to batter the walls. Fearing an assault, the King sued for terms. Coteiba agreed to retire on a heavy tribute and quota of horsemen; but first he must enter, build a Mosque, and inaugurate religious service in it; after that he would evacuate the place. He entered. The fire-temples were destroyed and the images burned, but the City was kept and not according to promise restored.[2] Coteiba's repeated perfidy was much spoken against; and some Syrian is said to have prophesied, but too truly, that the Caliphate would yet pay the penalty, and Damascus be ravaged by these wild Turcomans. Meantime the conqueror's hand fell heavily on Samarcand. Moslem families brought from Khorasan in great numbers were settled there; the Natives were all disarmed and none dared walk abroad at night on pain of death.

Coteiba's last campaign on the borders of China, 94–96 A.H.

During the next two or three years, aided by large contingents of horse from the tribes he had subdued (the favourite policy in the East of using subject peoples to

---

[1] Two Jewish tribes destroyed at Medina, *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 273, 307.

[2] One of the idols was held so sacred that anyone who touched it would immediately die. Coteiba seized a torch, and with a loud Takbir set it on fire; the golden nails in it weighed 50,000 mitheals. A granddaughter of Yezdegird, taken captive here, was sent to Damascus, and taken into the royal harem. Welid had a daughter by her.

A.H. 86-96.

Campaign on borders of China.

rivet their own chain[1]), Coteiba pushed his conquests forward, taking Khojend, Shush, and other cities of Ferghana, till he reached Kashgar and the confines of China. A curious tale is told of an interview with "the King of China,"—probably a border Mandarin,—who, to release Coteiba from an oath that he would take possession of the land, sent him a load of Chinese soil to trample on, a bag of Chinese coin by way of tribute, and four royal youths on whom to imprint his seal. Coteiba had now reached the limit of his conquests. While on this campaign he received tidings of the Caliph's death: suddenly the scene is changed and his future, as we shall see, all overcast.

Campaign of Ibn Casim on the Indus, 89-96 A.H. 714-717 A.D.

Like Coteiba in Central Asia, Mohammed ibn Casim, cousin of Hajjâj and governor of Mekran, was the first great conqueror on the Indian border. With a well-appointed army of 6000 men, he advanced on Sind and laid siege to its capital, Deibul. A catapult named *the Bride*, worked by 500 men, laid waste the City, and a stone shot from it overthrew the pinnacle of the famous temple of Budd, from which flaunted its great red flag. The omen struck terror into the enemy; the King fled, and Ibn Casim, leaving a garrison in the city, pursued him across the Indus, where, surrounded by his elephants, he was slain in a severe engagement. His wife and maidens, rather than suffer dishonour, set fire to their Palace, and were consumed with all their treasure. Then the conqueror took Brahmin-abad by storm,[2] and having made terms with Rôr, crossed the Biyas and invested Multan, which after a prolonged siege, the water having failed, surrendered at discretion. The fighting men were put to the sword, and their families, with the crowd of attendants on the shrine of Budd, made captive. Multan was then a centre of pilgrimage, people coming from all quarters to worship the idol. It was "the Gateway of India and the House of Gold." The spoil was incredible, and double the

Multan taken.

---

[1] In 95 A.H., 20,000 native levies are said to have followed Coteiba from Bokhara, Kish, Nusaf, and Khowarizm.

[2] Two parasangs from the later Mansûra "the Victorious." Spoken of as in the hilly country of Belochistan.

A.H. 86–96.

whole cost of the expedition, which was estimated by Hajjâj at sixty million pieces. While Ibn Casim rested here, enjoying the fruits of his splendid conquests, tidings of Welid's decease arrested his further progress eastward. He was recalled to Irac, where, with certain other adherents of Hajjâj, he was put to the torture and died.

Progress of Moslem arms in India, 100–125 A.H. 718–742 A.D.

With Ibn al Athir we may here anticipate a few years further the Moslem rule in India. Habib, one of Mohallab's family (on which now shone the sun of courtly favour), as governor of Sind, fixed his court at Rôr, and allowed the princes displaced by Ibn Casim to return, as protected, to their several States. The pious Omar II summoned them to embrace Islam, on which they received Arabian names. In the days of Hisham, a little later, Joneid pushed the Moslem bounds still farther east. But the prestige of Islam again waned for a time. Most of the princes relapsed into heathenism, and to hold them in check, the fortified camp Mahfuza (the *Protected*) was founded, from which expeditions, both naval and military, were sent forth. Things, however, says our Historian, "remained in India on a weak and feeble foot-" ing until the blessed accession of the Abbassides."

Heathenism and idolatry tolerated in India.

It should be noted here that in India there was an altogether new departure in the treatment of the subject races. Idolatry was tolerated. Temples were left standing, and their worship not disallowed. By Mahometan law, Jews and Christians might continue to profess their faith under Moslem rule; and even Parsees were, by a strained interpretation, brought within the exemption,[1] as followers of the "Book" of Zoroaster. But idolaters were to be pursued to the bitter end, and utterly rooted out. Such, the plain teaching of the Coran, had been the habitual policy hitherto;—the policy still, as we have seen, pursued in Central Asia. But in India a new leaf was turned. As Weil remarks,—"It no longer was a Holy
'war,—with the view, that is to say, of the conversion
'of the heathen. That object was now dropped. Side
'by side with Allah, idols might be worshipped, if only

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 443.

A.H. 86–96.

"tribute were duly paid." And thus, even under Mahometan rule, India remained largely a pagan land.

Progress in Armenia and Asia Minor.

Throughout this reign Moslem armies, commanded generally by leaders of the royal blood, made yearly inroads into Armenia and Asia Minor, which the Greeks, from reverses nearer home, were little able to withstand. In the year 89 A.H. a campaign against the Turks on the Caspian was undertaken with notable success. But all other conquests of this reign fade before the conquest of Spain. That was a victory which, though demanding a separate chapter for itself, we must be here content to treat in briefest outline.

Campaign of Musa in Western Africa, 89 A.H. 708 A.D.

Musa was, in 59 A.H., appointed Governor of the Mediterranean coast to the west of Egypt, by Abd al Aziz, brother of the Caliph and Ruler of Egypt, of which "Africa"[1] was a dependency. His predecessor had already retrieved the disasters that successively befel the Moslem army at Cairowan: and Musa having consolidated his power in the older districts, now, with the aid of his two sons, pushed the Moslem conquests to the farthest west. In successive engagements at Sus and Tlemsen, he completely overthrew the Berbers, took incredible multitudes prisoners,[2] and at last brought the native population, even to the bounds of Morocco, under his authority. Opposition ended, "Readers of the Coran" were appointed to instruct the people in the faith.[3] Naval expeditions were also set on foot, and successful descents made on Majorca and Sardinia.[4] Having established his freedman Taric at Tangier, as lieutenant over the newly conquered districts in the west, Musa returned to his headquarters at Cairowan.

---

[1] "Africa" was the name for the Moslem conquests stretching westward from Egypt to the Atlantic.

[2] The Fifth of the captives, the share of the state, amounted to 60,000;—the entire number being thus 300,000—the greatest, our historian adds, ever known. But the traditions regarding Musa are liable to a touch of romance.

[3] A few years further on we are told that by 100 A.H. "the whole of the Berbers were converted to Islam."

[4] A long account is given of the capture of its harbour, 92 A.H.; of the recovery of treasure cast into the sea, and secreted in the roof of the great church; and of the riches of the spoil. Other descents are mentioned 135 and 323 A.H., and finally in 400, when, however, the Moslem fleet of 120 ships was discomfited; after which no attempts were made on the island.

Musa's designs on Spain, 90 A.H. 709 A.D.

90 A.H.

Descent of Tarif, x. 91 A.H. July 710 A.D.

And of Taric, vii. 92 A.H. April 711 A.D.

The kingdom of Spain was at this period ruled by Roderic a usurper, to whom Count Julian, ruler of the coast lying over against Tangier, was bitterly opposed.[1] Ceuta, on the African side, was part also of Julian's domain. It occurred to him that with the help of the invaders from the East, he might now drive the Usurper from the throne. Entering therefore into friendly relations with Musa, he explained at an interview, the ease with which the narrow strait might be crossed; and Musa, nothing loth, was lured by the inviting prospect of a campaign in Spain. The Caliph, fearing the sea, at the first hesitated; but when it was explained how close was the opposite shore, he gave consent. Next year, by way of trial, Musa sent a few hundred men in four ships under command of Tarif, who made an easy descent on the near coast at a place that still bears his name, and returned with a spoil so rich that the army longed to repeat the attack upon a larger scale. Musa, thus emboldened, placed a force of 7000 men, chiefly Berbers and freedmen, with some Arabs, at the disposal of Taric, who, crossing the straits, took possession of the fortress called after him, Gibraltar.[2] From thence he ravaged the adjacent country of Algezira,[3] when Roderic, receiving tidings of the descent, hastened to repel the invader. Taric, apprised of this through Julian and his followers, appealed for additional troops to Musa, who sent him 5000 Arabs. Thus reinforced, Taric was able now, with 12,000 men, to hold his ground against the great army of Roderic. They met on the banks of the Guadalete, to the north of Medina Sidonia. For a week the issue was uncertain. But there was treachery in the Spanish camp. The numerous party opposed to Roderic, buoyed with the

---

[1] The daughters of the Spanish nobles used to be sent to Court to be ducated; and Roderic, we are told, had taken advantage of it to dishonour ulian's daughter, which was the cause of this bitterness. Gibbon rejects the tory, and Hallam also is so inclined; but for our story it is immaterial.

[2] Jebel-Taric, the hill of Taric.

[3] Arabic for *peninsula*.

A.H. 86-96.

hope that the Arabs, satiated with spoil, would soon recross the sea, and leave the throne to its proper claimant, fought feebly, and at last gave way. The Spanish force was routed, and Roderic in his flight drowned. But the spoil had not the effect expected. Instead of retiring, the Arabs, flushed with victory, stormed Ecija; and, daily swelled by fresh contingents scenting from afar a rich reward, spread themselves over the land. Malaga and Granada were captured and the province overrun. The people everywhere fled to the hills and fortresses, vainly fancied impregnable; and all the quicker, at the fearful report spread by the Conquerors themselves that they fed on human flesh. Leaving Cordova besieged by one of his generals, Taric, guided still by Julian, hastened to Toledo, the capital, which to his astonishment he found deserted by all but Jews. These, delivered from Christian thraldom, now threw in their lot with the invaders (how different from the days of Mahomet!), and were placed in charge of cities which the Conquerors found themselves too few to occupy. The inhabitants had all fled in terror, some as far even as Galicia. But it was by no means the policy of the Arabs to make the land a desert. And so the people were gradually tempted back by promise of security, toleration for their religion if only preached unostentatiously, and the establishment of Christian courts. In a city beyond the hills, carried there perhaps for safety, a relic beyond all value fell into Taric's hands, the famous *Table of Solomon*, set with pearls and rubies and all manner of precious stones, and having 360 feet. With this priceless jewel, Taric returned to Toledo, having within the short space of two years, reduced the greater part of Spain, and put every enemy to flight that dared to meet him in the field.

Taric's victories. End of ix. 92 A.H.

Toledo taken.

Table of Solomon, 93 A.H.

The splendid exploits of his Lieutenant made Musa envious. To rival his success, he set out himself with a large force and many warriors of note, and landed in Spain, 93 A.H. Guided in a course which Julian promised him would eclipse the glory of Taric, he struck out

Descent of Musa, ix. 93 A.H. June 712 A.D.

A.H. 86-96.

a new line of victory, stormed Sidonia, Carmona, and the ancient capital Seville. Merida was laid siege to, and the walls battered by engines. It resisted many months, and the garrison fought with desperate bravery. A spot, our Historian tells us, was still in his day called the "Martyrs' bastion," where a column of Moslems was cut to pieces by a party issuing from a hole beneath the wall. At last the city fell, and Musa, on the way to Toledo, met Taric at Talavera. He received him angrily, struck him on the head with his whip, and demanded an account of the booty. Friendly relations restored, the famous table was given up to Musa.[1] The generals then separated, Taric for Saragossa, and Musa for Salamanca and Astorga. Saragossa held out long, and it was not till Musa had rejoined his Lieutenant there that by their united efforts it was stormed. Musa then continued his victorious progress to the extreme north-east of Spain, and occupying Tarragona and Barcelona, reached as far even as to Gerona, on the border of France. There, tradition says, he was confronted by an image with the words engraved "*Sons of Ismail, hitherto and no farther—Return!*" and so he turned back.[2] Taric, taking a more southerly course, overran the entire coast, reducing Tortosan on the Ebro, Valencia, and other leading cities on his way.

Merida, 94 A.H.

Saragossa.

The tidings of Taric's ill-treatment by Musa had meanwhile reached the Caliph, who, displeased at it, and not unlikely jealous of his Viceroy's independent attitude, sent a messenger to recall him to Damascus. The summons met him on a new campaign to the West. Bidding the messenger fall into his train, Musa continued his progress of victory and devastation, till entering Galicia, he came in sight of the blue waves of the northern sea.[3]

Musa recalled, 95 A.H. 713 A.D.

---

[1] One of the feet was wanting, supplied by a golden substitute. More of this in note below.

[2] The tradition is curiously proleptic, and shows how fable often enters our annals. The words given are: "Sons of Ismael! here is your limit. Go "back! And if ye ask why, I tell you, that otherwise ye shall return to dis- "cord among yourselves, so that ye shall slay and behead one another."

[3] "Carrying the messenger with him he passed on to new parts, slaying 'and taking captive, pulling down churches and breaking up their bells, till he

A.H. 86–96.

Musa recalled, 95 A.H. 713 A.D.

A second messenger followed him to Lugo, with a sterner and immediate mandate. He was turned out of the camp by the imperious Conqueror, who now, however, felt that the summons could no longer be disobeyed. Carrying Taric therefore with him, he turned his face southward: and so, marching through the scenes of their unparalleled achievement, the two Conquerors made their way back to the straits of Gibraltar. Before quitting Spain, Musa placed his son Abd al Aziz at the head of the government. Two other sons were also put in command, the one at Cairowan, the other over Western Africa. Perhaps no family ever enjoyed a wider fame, or power more uncontrolled, than that of Musa at the moment.

Musa's fall, 96 A.H. 114 A.D.

The marvellous achievements of Musa—with but few parallels in history—were sufficient to have disturbed the equilibrium of any mind. But this will hardly excuse the indiscretion which led the recalled Conqueror to make his return through Africa a royal and triumphal progress, and thus justify the suspicions which had no doubt already marked him out at Court as a subject of danger. He carried with him countless store of rare and precious things, laden on endless lines of waggons and camels. A multitude of virgins of noble birth with their attendant maidens, and a vast crowd of Gothic captives in their strange attire, following in his train, attracted the gaze of the astonished people as he passed along.[1] At Cairo he stayed some time, and distributed rich marks of favour among his friends, especially the family of his patron Abd al Aziz, the late governor of Egypt, to whom he owed his rise. Progress was thus so slow that he did not reach Damascus till after the death of Welid. The new Caliph, Soleiman, received him coldly, deposed him from all his commands, cast him into prison, and laid such heavy demands upon him, that he was reduced to poverty, and

---

"reached the high lands overlooking the green ocean. When the second "messenger arrived in the city of Lugo, he seized the reins of his mule and "marched him out of the camp," etc.

[1] "Thirty thousand virgins with their attendant maidens": but the whole story of Musa is cast in an extravagant style.

when released, forced to beg from his friends the means of living. To add to his misfortune, his son Abd al Aziz, whom he had left to succeed him in Spain, was assassinated, as is supposed, by secret orders from Damascus; and the heartless Soleiman sent his head to the father with an insulting message:—"a grievous error on the Caliph's part," justly adds the Arabian annalist. Taric also must have retired into private life, for we hear no more of him. The fall of both resembles that of Khalid,—an ungrateful end for the three great Conquerors of their age.[1]

A.H. 86–96.

Musa's son murdered, 97 A.H. 715 A.D.

Grandeur of Welid's reign.

The era of Welid was glorious both at home and abroad. There is no other reign, not excepting even that of Omar, in which Islam so spread abroad and was consolidated. We may safely accept the judgment of the impartial Weil, who tells us that, "although Mussulman "historians, because of his supporting Hajjâj, call Welid a "tyrant, he is in our eyes the greatest, and in every respect "the most powerful and illustrious, ruler amongst all the "Commanders of the Faithful." From the borders of

---

[1] Another, but more romantic, and less likely, narrative is as follows:—

Musa reached Damascus while Welid was yet alive (which, if we look only to the dates, is not improbable). He vaunted himself at court, in depreciation of Taric, as the conqueror of Spain; and among the spoils belonging to himself and as such presented to the Caliph, was "Solomon's table." Taric upon this claimed that the prize was his, which Musa denied. "Ask him then," said Taric, "what has become of the lost foot" (see former note). Musa could not tell; whereupon Taric (who had kept it by him for just such an occasion) produced the wanting piece. And so Welid was satisfied that Musa had really treated Taric badly.

A curious account is also given of the death of Abd al Aziz, Musa's son. Himself an excellent man, he fell under the influence of Roderic's widow, who persuaded him to adopt the princely habits of the country. His followers being slow to make courtly obeisance (as resembling prostration at prayer), she had a low threshold made, through which all had to stoop as they approached the throne. She also made him wear Roderic's jewelled crown. His followers on this conspired to slay him as a renegade, 97 A.H. Others held that Soleiman, probably fearing that Abd al Aziz might assume regal and independent power, sent orders for his death at the time his father came to grief at court, and that his enemies fell upon him as he was praying in his chamber with the Coran before him. "When the head was sent to his father with the Caliph's cruel "question, 'Dost thou recognise it?' he exclaimed,—'Welcome to thy martyrdom, my son; for truly they did slay thee in thy piety and uprightness.' "And it was counted as one of Soleiman's chief misdeeds."

A.H. 86–96.

Welid's grand reign.

China and the banks of the Indus to the Atlantic, his word was law. In his reign culture and the arts began to flourish. He enlarged and beautified the Mosques of Medina and Jerusalem, and founded one at Damascus, which still exists. He established schools and hospitals, and made provision for the aged, blind, and lame. He frequently visited the markets; and so encouraged manufacture and design, that people began to take an interest in their advancement. Roads, with wells at convenient stations, were made throughout the kingdom, and the comfort of travellers, notably of pilgrims to the Holy places, specially cared for. More perhaps than any other Caliph, he knew how to hold the balance between the Arabian tribal rivalries, and ruled at large with a powerful hand. If Hajjâj be an exception, Welid, at the least, held him in better check than did his predecessor. Looking at it from first to last, we shall not find in the annals of the Caliphate a more glorious reign than that of Welid.

Welid mild and condescending.

As a proof of his mildness and consideration, it is told of him that when in 91 A.H. on Pilgrimage, he visited Medina and made large presents to the people, the court of the Mosque was cleared of worshippers, that in company with Omar he might inspect at leisure the improvements he had made. One old man alone would neither rise up nor salute the Caliph. Omar tried to divert the attention of his cousin from the uncourtly worshipper; but Welid saw, and at once recognised him. "How art thou, Said?" cried the Caliph. Without the slightest movement or salutation, the aged man replied:—"Very well, I am "thankful to say, and how doth the Commander of the "Faithful?" "The last of his race!" exclaimed Welid, in admiration of the fast vanishing homeliness and symplicity which others might have rebuked as uncourtly rudeness.

Death of Welid, vi. 96 A.H. Feb. 715 A.D.

It has been already noticed that Welid wished to displace his brother Soleiman from being Heir-apparent in favour of his own son. He died before the change could be accomplished: but the effect was, not the less, to create an intense feeling of resentment in the mind of Soleiman, especially towards Coteiba and the adherents of Hajjâj, both of whom had encouraged Welid in his design. A.H. 86–96.

Welid was forty-five at his death, and he had reigned nearly ten years.

CHAPTER LII

SOLEIMAN

96–99 A.H. 715–717 A.D.

Soleiman, 96 A.H. 715 A.D.

SOLEIMAN succeeded at once to the throne. It went as a saying at Damascus that Welid's turn was for art; Soleiman's for the Harem and good living; Omar's (the next to follow) for devotion. The fashion of the Court changed accordingly. With the first, the talk was of culture; with the second, of slave-girls, marriage, and divorce; with the third, of austerity, and recitation of the Coran by night. The prowess of the Empire waned under Soleiman. He was called, indeed, the Key of blessing,—but only because he nominated Omar for his successor.

Declension in Spain and the East.

Soleiman weakened the administration of Spain by conniving at,—if indeed he did not actually order,—the murder of Abd al Aziz, the able follower of his father Musa; the Christians, profiting by the neglect that followed, rose upon their conquerors in Asturias, and the mountainous region in the north. Ibn Casim, the successful invader of India, recalled as a follower of the hated Hajjâj, came to an evil end. And under one of the sons of Mohallab (now the favoured house) who succeeded, the progress of Islam in the far East slackened, and its prestige declined.

Rebellion and end of Coteiba.

With Coteiba, the death of Welid caused the utmost consternation. Appointed by Hajjâj, he well knew the bitterness of Soleiman towards all his adherents, and the danger in which they stood from the enmity of Yezid, the favourite of the day. In an evil hour, he set up for himself, and called on the army to join him against the Government. But miscounting his influence, he fatally

A.H. 96–99.

overshot the mark. The troops did not respond. The Yemen faction was hostile, and rallied under an opposing banner. Fighting thus with but a scanty following, he was slain, and his head, with those of eleven of his brethren, sent a welcome offering to the Caliph. And so the conqueror of Bokhara, Samarcand, and Kashgar, came to an untimely and dishonoured end. It was said of him by a Turk, *Coteiba at the world's end was more terrible to us than Yezid at our very door.* He had been one of the greatest heroes of Islam, were not his name stained by treachery and bloodshed, and his career cut short by a heedless rebellion.

Yezid succeeds in Irac, 96 A.H.

Yezid son of Mohallab, the Caliph's minion, was at first appointed to Irac, but unwilling to incur unpopularity in collecting the severe assessments of Hajjâj, which barely sufficed for the now lavish expenditure at Damascus, he obtained the nomination of a financial officer to undertake the ungrateful task. Finding, however, the exchequer thus closed against his own extravagance, he prevailed on the Caliph, by the vain boast that his conquests would cast Coteiba's into the shade, to give him Khorasan. Arriving at Merve nearly a year after the outbreak of Coteiba, he felt bound to make good his boast; and casting aside his luxuries, took the lead of the army, now 100,000 strong, of whom some 60,000 were Arabs. His efforts were directed to the tract lying on the south-eastern recess of the Caspian Sea,[1] which, as we have seen, had been overrun by Said ibn al Aas so long ago as the reign of Othman. But though tributary in name, the native Rulers, conscious of their strength, were ever withholding payment of their dues, and no one dared to set foot within that inaccessible and rebellious region. This region formed a barrier to communication between Irac and Merve, and a southern circuit had consequently to be made by troops and travellers for Central Asia. It was therefore an important object to reduce the intervening space. Starting from Merve, Yezid first attacked Jorjan; and its defenders were driven back into their defiles, where after suffering much hardship they

And Khorasan, 97 A.H.

---

[1] Jorjan, Tabaristan, etc.

A.H. 96–99.

Yezid's campaign in Jorjan and Tabaristan, 98 A.H. 716 A.D.

came to terms. Here Yezid gave first proof that he might vie with Coteiba in cruelty as well as conquest; for although all who had made terms were spared, the country was ravaged, innumerable captives taken, and multitudes slain in cold blood.[1] Leaving 4000 in Jorjan, he marched south-west to Tabaristan, where the Prince, notwithstanding help from Gilan and Deilem, was discomfited and driven into the hills. Thither the Moslems following were drawn within dangerous defiles, whence severely punished, they were pursued again into the plain. This reverse encouraged the men of Jorjan, breaking their treaty, to fall upon the garrison, and slay them to a man. Alarmed at his rear being thus cut off from Merve, Yezid made peace with Tabaristan; and turning back to Jorjan, swore a great oath (similar to that of Khalid) that he would not stay his sword till he had eaten bread of corn ground by the blood of his enemies. The City, strongly planted on an eminence, held out for seven months, and then fell into the hands of the inhuman conqueror, who butchering thousands of his victims in an adjoining valley, turned the stream upon a mill that overlooked the ghastly scene, and so fulfilled his oath. He also lined the approaches to the City on the right hand and on the left, for miles, with impaled bodies.[2] Yezid returning to Merve, reported his success to the Caliph, and with a vainglorious boast magnified the booty into an enormous sum, such as would have yielded four million pieces for the Fifth.[3]

His cruelty in Jorjan.

Unsuccessful attack on Constantinople, 96–98 A.H. 714–716 A.D.

To counterbalance the victories in Central Asia, Soleiman had the mortification of finding the vast preparations made to storm Constantinople useless. Shortly before his death, Welid had fitted out a fleet to attack the Byzantine capital by sea, while columns from Armenia and Asia Minor co-operated by land. Everything appeared to favour the project. Rebellion at home had paralysed the Greek power, while the disloyalty of Leo the Isaurian, who joined hands with Maslama the Caliph's brother in command, afforded the best prospect of success. Unexpectedly, Leo himself was raised to the throne, and threw the unnatural alliance over. The Moslem troops on both sides of the Bosphorus were defeated, and suffered such hardship from hunger, frost, and pestilence, that after lying before Constantinople for a year, the fleet was forced to retire, and the invasion came to a disastrous and inglorious end.

---

[1] Tradition places the number at 14,000, which seems hardly credible.

[2] Tradition varies as to the numbers from 12,000 to 40,000; but here again the statement seems incredible.

[3] Another tradition says six millions. His secretary warned him of the danger of making so extravagant an estimate, a warning which, as we shall see, was not misplaced.

A.H. 96–99.

98 A.H.

Soleiman died early in 99 A.H., at Dabic, in the north, whither he had gone to watch the Byzantine struggle. A son, nominated his successor, died before him. On his deathbed the Caliph wished to appoint another son, a minor; but he was persuaded instead to name Omar, son of his uncle Abd al Aziz so long governor of Egypt, and after him his brother Yezid, to succeed. For the nomination of Omar, the memory of Soleiman is blessed, hough he himself receives but little other praise. The ollowing incident illustrates his heartless cruelty, and ow the manners of his Court did but follow suit. On pilgrimage to Mecca, he halted at Medina, where a conoy of 400 Greek captives were brought into his camp. Doomed to death, they were ranged before the royal ssembly for the Courtiers and Poets in the Caliph's train, y way of sport, to try their hands upon. One after nother, these brought his sword down upon the neck of wretched captive; and at each ringing stroke, the head of victim rolled off. The turn came to Farazdac, the poet, ho was handed a sword the worse for wear. Once and gain the blow failed of its effect, whereat the Caliph nd those around him jeered. Upbraided thus for his vkwardness, Farazdac cast the sword away, and extemporised some couplets which turned the laugh aside.[1]

Death of Soleiman, ii. 99 A.H. Sept. 717 A.D.

---

[1] The poetry is indubitable evidence of the cruel tale being founded on t. The point of it lies in this, that a somewhat corresponding failure d once been experienced by a chief of the Beni Abs. These were the ternal relatives of the Caliph, who, joining their master, had exposed

A.H. 96–99.

Soleiman cruel and dissolute.

Soleiman was not only cruel but dissolute and jealous; and as such was used to guard his Harem by a watch of eunuchs. Handsome in mien and feature, it is related of him that at Dabic, arrayed in a green robe and turban, he looked at himself in the mirror, and said, "Am I not the kingly youth?" A slave-girl stood admiring by; "What thinkest thou?" he said to her. "I was thinking," she sang in plaintive verse, "that thou art the best of joys, if "thou wouldest but remain; yet for mankind there is no "continuing here. No blemish can I see in thee that is "in other men, excepting only that thou, like them, must "pass away." And he died within the week,—having reigned two years and a half.

Farazdac to the ridicule of the company; and so he adroitly turned the laugh against them in his stinging verses, which ridiculed the failure of their own chieftain.

The first captive brought up, a Patrician, was assigned as a mark of honour to a great-grandson of Aly, to behead. The poet Jarir was also honoured with a captive of rank. It is almost incredible that such heartless despite should have been shown towards human life. But so we read, and that without any comment or expression of surprise. How low the morale of the Court under Soleiman!

CHAPTER LIII

OMAR II

99–101 A.H. 717–720 A.D.

Omar II., ii. 99 A.H. Sept. 717 A.D.

IF Soleiman differed from Welid, Omar differed incomparably more, not only from both, but also from all other Caliphs both before and after him. An unaffected piety, tinged albeit with bigotry, led to uprightness, moderation, simplicity of life, and to a rule that was eminently just and peaceful. On assuming the Caliphate, the royal grooms brought before him the prancing steeds of the court stables to choose from; but he preferred his own modest equipage. He bade his wife surrender to the treasury the costly jewels given her by her father Abd al Melik, else he could no longer live with her; and she obeyed; on Omar's death, her brother Yezid succeeding to the throne, offered to restore them, but she, mindful of her husband's wish, declined. Calling his other wives and slave-girls to him, Omar told them, that as now he had to bear the weight of empire, they must no longer expect from him the same attention and benevolence as before; but it was open to them to leave: they wept, and all declared that they would not be parted from him. In his first oration he invited only those to join his company who would help in doing that which was just and right. Poets, Orators, and such like, soon found that his Court was no place for them, while it was thronged by godly and devout divines. His pious scruples led him sometimes into acts of questionable expediency. The demesnes at Fadak, reserved by the Prophet for public charity,[1] but some time

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 486, 518.

A.H. 99-101.

Pious and bigoted, but just.

back wrongfully appropriated by Merwan for the expenses of the Court, were now restored to their original use; and this, with other resumptions of the kind, created ill-feeling in the Royal house. His devotion to Islam prejudiced him against the employment of Jews and Christians: and in a rescript addressed to his lieutenants he bade them exalt the true faith, abase all others, and appoint none but Moslems to offices of trust,—quoting verses of the Coran in support of his command.[1] He was also hard and unpitiful in exacting from those of other creeds the severest burdens it was lawful to impose. But whatever the bigotry or even fanaticism of his rule, and however much he may have sought to proselytise by favouring the religion of Islam, his justice in administering the law according to its dictates, was surpassed by none. When appealed to by the Christians of Damascus to give them back the Church of St. John turned by Welid into the city Mosque,—though unable to concede their request, he restored to them other churches, which under the capitulation should have been theirs, in compensation.

Discontinues imprecation on Aly.

Hitherto in the Public prayers on Friday throughout the Empire, a petition cursing Aly had been in use. The imprecation was now withdrawn. A sense of duty no doubt led to this action, justified, as he thought, by a passage in the Coran, which enjoins justice and kindness towards relatives.[2] When a schoolboy at Medina, the practice had been denounced to him by a holy man, whose teaching he adopted, and never departed from. Omar had urged his father to discontinue it when Governor of Egypt; but he replied that the cessation, however otherwise right and proper, would damage the Omeyyad reign, and favour transfer of the Caliphate to the house of Aly. The imprecation was resumed after Omar's death. But its temporary abolition did no doubt stimulate the movement now taking shape against the ruling Dynasty.

In the second year of his reign there was a Theocratic rising in Irac that did not differ from others of its kind, excepting that from the leniency of Omar it gained a

---

[1] Coran III. 118 and V. 58.

[2] Coran XVI. 90.

A.H. 99-101.

dangerous head, requiring in the end 10,000 men to put it down. His conduct was certainly here characterised by weakness. Though up in arms against him, he forbade these Socialists to be attacked until they had first shed blood. Sending for their leaders, to argue their grievances and traitorous tenets with them, he heard their scruples patiently and answered them, but without effect. What troubled him most was their plea that, though he himself was orthodox and saintly, yet the godless Yezid would succeed him. Omar could only answer that with succession to the Throne he could not interfere, as it had been so provided by the same authority from which his own title was derived. The faction was stimulated by Omar's concessions to their prejudices; and equally so were the Omeyyad family troubled at his attitude, as dangerous to their dynasty.[1]

Kharejite rising in Irac, 100 A.H.

There is not much to record of adventure, military or administrative, in the reign of Omar. His first concern was to bring safely back what remained of the armament so bootlessly launched by his predecessors against Constantinople. Large supplies of food and carriage were sent to Maslama, and the withdrawal was thus successfully carried out. Elsewhere the efforts of Omar were mainly marked by endeavours to convert the nations to Islam. Among the Berbers these were most successful. But in Spain the task was not so easy; and therefore, to reduce the influence of the Christians, their lands were divided amongst the Conquerors. A royal Mosque was also founded, in this reign, at Saragossa. To promote conversion in the East, Omar addressed a rescript to the kings of Sind, inviting them to embrace Islam, with the promise of thereby enjoying all the privileges and immunities of the Arab race. This they did, and obtained Arabian names, but again, in the reign of Hisham, apostatised.

Efforts at conversion in Africa and Spain.

The most marked event, however, in the reign of

---

[1] It is even asserted that they set one to poison his drink, and that of this he died. But this is not consistent with other traditions, and looks like a fabrication of the Abbasside enemies of the Omeyyad line.

A.H. 99-101.

Fall of Yezid, 99 A.H.

Omar, was the arraignment of Yezid, son of Mohallab. Even Soleiman is said to have become dissatisfied with his favourite; and Omar, regarding him now as a tyrant, summoned him to give an account of his stewardship in Khorasan. Yezid no sooner set foot in Irac than he was put in chains, and so conducted to Damascus. Omar held him to the letter of his reported victories and prize in Central Asia. In vain Yezid protested that the report was made to magnify the achievement in the people's eyes, and that he had never thought of being called to account for the exact amount which he had named. Omar would none of the excuse; Yezid must produce a reckoning of the whole, and make good what was due. Finally, he was banished in coarse prison dress to an island in the Red Sea. But warned of his dangerous aims even in that isolated place, the Caliph removed him to Aleppo, where he was kept in strict confinement. His son, whom he had left to take his place at Merve, came to intercede for him, but in vain; and dying shortly after, Omar performed the funeral service over him, saying that he was a better man than his father. Yezid had fancied Omar to be but a sanctimonious hypocrite; he now found him terribly in earnest; but he had reason to fear his successor even more. On hearing that Omar had sickened, he bribed the guard, and effected his escape to Bussorah, where he raised a dangerous rebellion, as we shall in the sequel see.

Religious policy in Khorasan.

The policy pursued in Khorasan and Central Asia after the recall of Yezid is another evidence that the Caliph was more intent on the spread of the Faith than on temporal aggrandisement. There were loud cries of harshness and exaction from the professed converts of Khorasan. Omar sent for a deputation of these to represent their grievances, and finding their complaint well-founded, deposed Jarrah the Viceroy, and insisted that all who said the creed, and joined in the religious services, should be exempt from burdens, and placed on the same footing as themselves. To consolidate his rule, he stayed the sword against outlying countries, and called in the garrisons and columns that

A.H. 99–101.

had been settled in those heathen parts. Throughout all the provinces retained, the people finding now the comfort and advantages of conversion, began to flock in multitudes to the faith. At first they were tested by their willingness to be circumcised; but Omar hearing of it, forbade a test nowhere enjoined in the Coran; "for Mahomet," said he, "was sent to call men to the faith, not to circumcise them." The burdens on unbelievers were imposed, as elsewhere, to the utmost, but justice towards them must also be observed. No churches, synagogues, or fire-temples were to be destroyed: but the erection of new ones was forbidden. The policy of Omar was thus to fill Khorasan and the adjoining districts with a population of contented believers; to consolidate the faith and cast the sword aside. And in this policy so far as his short and transient reign allowed, he was successful.

Religious policy in Khorasan.

A son of seventeen died before him. Some touching passages are related of Omar's conversation with this youth, who was like-minded with him in high religious aspiration. He urged his Father to enforce reform and bring back society to the primitive practice of what was right. Omar replied that he had done what he could by gentle means, but if Moslem rule were to be regenerated as his son desired, it must be accomplished by force; and "there is no good," said he, "in that reform which can be "enforced by the sword alone."

Death of a pious son.

Though devoid of stirring events, there is much that is attractive in the reign of Omar. It is a relief, amidst bloodshed, intrigue, and treachery, to find a Caliph devoted to what he believed the highest good both for himself and for his people. The saint might be morbid, over-scrupulous, and bigoted; but there are few, if any, throughout this history, whose life leaves a more pleasing impression on the reader's mind than that of Omar.

Attractive character.

It was the middle of 101 A.H., after a reign of two years and a half, that Omar sickened. In a few weeks he died, and was buried at Dair Saman, near Hims. He was succeeded by his cousin Yezid, son of Abd al Melik, according to his brother Soleiman's last will.

Death of Omar II, Rajab, 101 A.H. Jan. 720 A.D.

CHAPTER LIV

YEZID II

101–105 A.H. 720–724 A.D.

Yezid II, 101 A.H. 720 A.D.

THE Kharejite outbreak in Irac had hardly been quelled when a more serious rising threatened Yezid II—the rebellion, namely, of his namesake Yezid son of Mohallab. The accession of the new Ruler revived tribal jealousies; for his wife was niece to Hajjâj; and so throwing over the Yemen faction, Yezid II took up the cause of the family and adherents of Hajjâj, all of whom, as we have seen, had been sorely pursued by Soleiman. Yezid, Mohallab's son had, as the favourite of Soleiman, unfortunately as it now turned out for himself, carried out the orders of his Patron with great severity; and turning a deaf ear to her cry, had confiscated to a vast amount the wealth which the present Caliph's wife inherited from her father; and so her husband had threatened that if he ever came to power, he would cut him into a thousand pieces. For this reason Yezid, when he heard of Omar's last sickness, and knew that his enemy Yezid II must succeed, escaped from prison, and fled to Bussorah. There he rallied numerous friends around him, for with all his failings Yezid was free and openhanded; so having attacked the Palace, he slew the Governor, seized the treasury, and by profuse largesses raised a threatening force. The Caliph, now alarmed, sent to offer a free pardon; but Yezid had too deeply compromised himself, and must fight it out to the bitter end. The rebellion gained so great a head, that he was able to send governors to Fars, Kerman, and other centres in the East. At Bussorah all the adherents of Hajjâj that fell into his

Rebellion of Yezid son of Mohallab.

A.H. 101-105.

Rebellion of Yezid son of Mohallab.

hands were slain, but the Chief men of the city, even such as favoured Yezid, fearing to compromise themselves with the Court, made their escape to Kufa. Yezid himself settled down inactive at Bussorah, till tidings of an army 80,000 strong advancing from Syria under command of Maslama the Caliph's brother, forced him to take the field. His brothers urged him to leave Irac and occupy Khorasan, or the strongholds in the nearer mountains, where the discontented would flock to him, and thus weary out the Syrian force; but he declined to be "like the bird that flies from hilltop to hilltop," and so moving forward he occupied Wasit. Maslama advanced on Kufa where there was a strong party in favour of Yezid; and having deposed the Governor, with difficulty suppressed a rising. Then crossing the Euphrates, he took ground on the left bank of the river. Yezid, leaving one of his brothers with a strong reserve at Wasit, marched against his enemy. A week passed in skirmishing and single combats. Then Yezid attacked the Caliph's army by night, but they were on the alert and the onset failed. Next day there was a great battle. Yezid harangued his army, denouncing the Omeyyads as a godless race, against whom it were a more sacred duty to war than against the Turks, and thus bring back the pure observances of their holy faith,—words that must have sounded strange from the lips of the unprincipled worldling. On the other side, to nerve his men by making retreat impossible, Maslama set fire to the bridge behind them. The rebel army, unable to sustain the Syrian onset, fell back; and Yezid, hearing that his favourite brother was killed, rushed upon the enemy's ranks, crying that life after that was no longer worth living, and was slain. On this, his remaining brothers, unable to hold their position at Wasit, retired, after beheading all the prisoners in their hands; and, with wives and children, took ship by the gulf to a fortress in Kerman, hoping that its Governor, who owed his post to Yezid, would give his family and kindred shelter. But they were mistaken; the brothers were put to death, and the

His defeat and death.

A.H. 101-105.

Slaughter of Mohallab's house and followers.

women and children sold into slavery.[1] Equally cruel was the fate of the prisoners at Kufa, where 300 were by the Caliph's orders slain. In companies of twenty and thirty, they were brought out, some of them naked, and decapitated in cold blood. Thus the Caliph slaked his wrath against the faction hostile to Hajjâj. And so perished the house of Mohallab, none of whose descendants were meet representatives of that great man. The butcheries and contempt of human life we now so often read of, are a painful feature of the day. The cruel scene, however, is but a fit ending to the career of the man who drove the corn-mill of Jorjan with his victims' blood.

Rising in Khorasan, 102–104 A.H.

The services of Maslama in this dangerous rebellion, and in the campaign against the Greeks, were rewarded by the government of Irac and Khorasan. As his lieutenant at Merve, Maslama appointed his son-in-law Said, a weak man, called in derision *Khozeina*, from affecting in his dress the attire of a Persian lady. The choice was far from fortunate. There was a general rising of the hordes in Khojend and Ferghana, which became dangerous owing to Moslem inactivity. The tributary Soghdians, threatened by these, sought protection from Merve, but help being slow of coming, they meanwhile made overtures to the Turks, and between the two suffered grievously. When Moslem forces did arrive, the Soghdians returned at first to their allegiance. Information, however, having reached the Moslem general of the murder of an Arab (for numbers of Arabians and Persians had begun to settle in the land), he sent for the culprit, and slew him in his tent. The Soghdians retaliated by putting to death the Mussulman prisoners in their hands ; on which the General fell upon the Soghdian residents, who having been meanwhile disarmed had only staves wherewith to defend themselves. The whole, 3000 in number, fell by the sword.[2]

---

[1] A cruel and apparently unlawful act in the case of women professing the faith of Islam.

[2] Another tradition says 7000, which, even with any conventional margin, seems incredible. The Soghdian merchants were allowed to retire before the massacre. A romantic story is told of the fort of Bahli, occupied by a clan of

Fighting went on more or less throughout the reign in these outlying provinces, but with no very marked results. A.H. 101-105.

Irac, Asia Minor, and Armenia, 102-104 A.H.

Maslama being unequal to the difficult task of collecting the revenue in Irac, the government was given to Omar Ibn Hobeira, an ambitious scion of the Fezâra tribe, in reward for his military service. He had distinguished himself in the campaign against the Kharejites, and more recently on the northern border of Mesopotamia. In Asia Minor, the Moslem possessions were quiet. But towards the North-east several heavy, and not always fortunate, operations were carried on against the Khizr, Kiphjak, and other hordes inhabiting the mountain region between the Black and Caspian seas. The first army sent thither suffered a bad defeat, losing their camp, and being driven out of the country. A second force retrieved the disaster, and occupied Balanja and other important cities; but incautiously pressing their advance too far, were overtaken by winter, and were surrounded and cut off by Turcoman hordes. The Caliph promised fresh support, but dying shortly after, left the task to his Successor. 104 A.H.

Africa.

In Africa things went from bad to worse. The Caliph appointed one who had been a favourite secretary of Hajjâj as governor; and he, practising the harsh tactics he had learned of his master against the converted Berbers, roused an insurrection which ending in his death, relaxed the bonds of discipline and attachment to the Court.

Spain.

Spain, as a dependency of Africa, was in an even less satisfactory relation to the Caliphate. Its authority being mediate and intermittent, the governing hand, strong elsewhere, was for this great conquest changeful and often weak; while the leaders, though valiant in the field,

---

the Soghdians, who remained loyal. One of the Turcoman generals wished to marry a lady in the fort; on her refusal they besieged the place. A Moslem column came on the scene just as they were on the point of surrendering from thirst. The Turks were attacked and routed. They fled out of sight, and the Mussulmans meanwhile bore away every man, woman, and child to a place of safety. The Turks returning, found the fortress empty, not a soul to be seen, and declared that it was the genii who had done the miracle.

A.H. 101-105.

Inroad into France, 100 A.H. 718 A.D.

were in the civil branch intent chiefly on their own aggrandisement. In the year 100 A.H. the Moslem troops, attracted by the weakness of France, which was at the moment torn by internal discord, and by the hatred of the Native race to their new masters from the north, made an inroad into its southern provinces. Ravaging the land as far as Nismes, they returned to Spain laden with booty. Tempted by this success, two or three years after, they again crossed the Pyrenees, stormed Narbonne and garrisoned its fortress as their permanent headquarters. Advancing, they laid siege to Toulouse, but were forced to raise it on the approach of the enemy, by whom they were put disastrously to flight. The scattered fragments rallied under the banner of the famous Abd al Rahman,[1] and found a safe retreat in Narbonne. But the reverse, bruited far and wide, emboldened the northern Spaniards, who had already in Asturias thrown off the yoke, to fresh efforts against the Moslems, on whom about this time they inflicted a serious defeat. The mountainous region was a source of strength to them; and there the seeds of a new power were being sown, which in the fulness of time brought Moslem rule to an end in Spain.[2]

Pyrenees crossed again, 103 A.H.

Alyite and Abbasside canvass.

In a reign so weak and so unpopular, it is no wonder that intrigue on the part of the Alyites, and now also amongst the descendants of Abbas (of whose designs mention is now for the first time made), gained ground throughout the East. A deputation from Irac canvassing the cause, in the harmless garb of merchants, was arrested in Khorasan and taken before "Khozeina." But he, listening to their feigned story, and accepting the guarantee of their friends, allowed them to go. And so the cause insidiously grew.

Last of the Companions.

Year by year, tradition has up to this time been chronicling the death of aged men who having been in the society of Mahomet, are dignified as his *Companions*. Such notices, by the lapse of time, now come to a natural

---

[1] Or, as he is called by European writers, Abderame.

[2] The Moslems lost Narbonne, and were finally driven out of France in 759 A.D. See M. Reinaud's *Invasions des Sarrazins*, Paris, 1856.

A.H. 101–105.

close. In 89 A.H. the last two of these who lived in Syria died, one aged 100, the other, a "Companion who had seen the two Kiblas."[1] Others survived in Irac for a year or two later. But the last of all who had seen and known the Prophet, died at Mecca in the year 101.[2] "Companions" always enjoyed special and high distinction in Moslem society. They would have done so under any circumstances, as having seen and conversed with Mahomet himself. But a fresh value as time went on began to attach to their words. The Coran, at first the sole guide in all concerns, social, legal, and spiritual, was gradually found inadequate for the novel wants of an ever-expanding Moslem world. The word and wont (*Sunnat*) of the Prophet was now called in to supplement it. Collectors of tradition thus sprang up everywhere, who sought out "Companions" from the ends of the earth, and spent their lives in noting down their remembrance of incidents connected with the life of Mahomet. Nothing, however trivial, came amiss; for every word and every act might form a precedent hereafter in social or legal obligation. The profession thus came to be one of high repute, and hundreds of thousands of traditions have been handed down of every shade of credibility, upon which to a great extent the law and custom of Islam has been built, and which incidentally also give us a clear and generally authentic view of the Prophet's life itself.

Collectors of traditions, or *Sunnat*.

Early in his reign Yezid was persuaded to nominate as successor his brother Hisham, and after him his own son Welid, then but eleven years of age. Homage was done to both accordingly throughout the Empire. A few years later he repented that he had not given the succes-

Hisham nominated successor.

---

[1] That is, remembered when Mahomet prayed with his face towards Jerusalem as his Kibla, before he changed it towards Mecca. See *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 177–183.

[2] His name is Amir Abul Tufeil. Others are mentioned as dying in this year who were born in Mahomet's lifetime; but they had not seen him. One of these died in 98 A.H. over 100 years old. He had gone as a boy to Medina to make confession of his faith to Mahomet, but arrived just after his death, and so never saw him alive; another is mentioned as surviving till 109 A.H., who must have been over 100.

A.H. 101–105.

sion immediately to his son; but did not venture on a change.

Yezid's passion for a slave-girl.

Yezid had even a greater passion for the Harem than any of his predecessors, but it was more fixed and constant. We are told of a slave-girl Habîba and a songstress Sallâma. His attachment to the former was so great that he did not many days survive her death. He had retired with her for a season to a garden retreat in Palestine, and there, casting playfully a grape-stone into her mouth, it choked her, and she died upon the spot. For three days he clung weeping to her relics. At last he was persuaded to let her be buried. The funeral service was performed by his brother Maslama, who feared that if the Caliph were seen by the people, they would be scandalised at the extravagance of his grief. He never recovered composure or self-control, and died within a week. The cry of Sallâma, who was tending his last moments, was the first intimation of the fact to his family and attendants.[1]

Death of Yezid II, vii. 105 A.H. Jan. 724 A.D.

Yezid II died at the age of forty, having reigned a little over four years;—an inglorious reign, which failed to stay, if it did not actually hasten, the decadence of the Omeyyad house. He was succeeded by his brother Hisham, another son of Abd al Melik.

---

[1] The romantic tale of Habiba throws a strange light on the Royal harem, and the conditions of its domestic life. Some years before his accession, when on pilgrimage to Mecca, Yezid purchased her for 4000 pieces of gold; but his brother Soleiman, then Caliph, was displeased at the purchase; and so he returned her to the merchant, who then sold her to an Egyptian. When Yezid succeeded to the throne, his wife, a granddaughter of Othman, said one day to him,—"Is there yet any one thing in the world, my love, left thee to desire?" "Yes," he answered, "and it is Habîba." "So she sent to Egypt and bought the object of his heart's desire. Then having adorned her as a bride, she seated her on a couch in an inner chamber behind a curtain, and called her husband; and as they talked, again she asked 'Is there aught yet in the world left for thee to long after?' 'Yea, and thou knowest it all thyself.' So she drew the curtain aside, and saying 'Yes, I know it; there sits Habiba waiting for thee,' she arose and left them together. And Yezid loved his wife all the more for it."

CHAPTER LV

CALIPHATE OF HISHAM. CONTINUED DECADENCE OF THE OMEYYAD DYNASTY

105–125 A.H. 724–743 A.D.

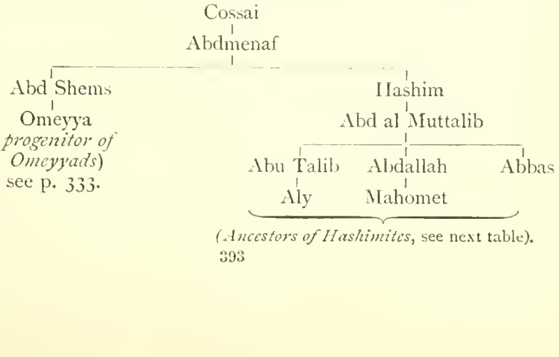
Hisham, 105 A.H. 724 A.D.

HISHAM now entered peaceably on a long reign. Exemplary as a true believer, he banished, like Omar II, from his Court all things inconsistent with the profession of Islam, and his mild and generally upright administration might have restored prosperity to the Empire, had not the evil genius of his predecessors still cast its blight upon the throne. There was much besides to cause depression. His Lieutenants were not always happily chosen, and they so played upon his two defects of character, avarice and suspicion, as sometimes to betray him into unguarded and cruel action, as well as cause him to miss the friendship and popularity which a well-timed liberality would have secured. Military enterprise was nowhere successful in his reign, and indeed repeatedly suffered severe disaster. From the first Hisham threw himself into the arms of the Yemen party, and thus alienated from his rule the Northern faction.

From early times, anterior even to the birth of Mahomet, there existed a rivalry between the two chief stocks of the Coreish, the descendants namely of Hashim and of Omeyya.[1]

---

[1] See *Life of Mahomet*, pp. xcvii, c, and ciii. This table will explain the relation between the two branches, the Hashimite and the Omeyyad :—



(*Ancestors of Hashimites*, see next table).

A.H. 105–125.

Antagonism between the houses of Hashim and Omeyya.

The Prophet, sprung from the former, suffered bitter opposition, both in field and forum, from the Omeyyads, till the conquest of Mecca converted the whole body of the Coreish, and welded friend and foe equally within the bonds of Islam. In the first enthusiasm of the faith, all distinctions of the kind vanished. But they gradually came to life again, and burst out fiercer than ever on the murder of Othman, and in the struggle between Muavia and Aly; while the Kharejites, who were continually rising in rebellion, recognised neither the one house nor the other, but demanded a purely theocratic rule. Things calmed down in the lengthened reign of Muavia. But the tragic end of Hosein and his family at Kerbala, caused a strong reaction towards the house of Aly; and so there arose the party called Shie-ites (or Sectaries), advocating the divine right of succession in the line of Aly, and in it alone;—a doctrine which began to be busily but secretly circulated by a widely scattered and disloyal body.[1]

Claim of Mohammed descendant of Abbas.

But now another and more dangerous aspirant came upon the scene. This was Mohammed, great-grandson of Abbas, the Prophet's uncle. No pretensions had been heretofore advanced by this branch of the Hashimite stock. The idea of their right to the sovereignty was of recent growth, and it was not till the present reign that it took definite shape in supersession of the house of Aly. The Abbasside advocates, to conciliate the Shie-ite interest, spread the report that the son of Hosein (the "Hanefite" pretender) had on his deathbed bequeathed his right to Mohammed. Whether this be so or no, the plea of both parties was based in common on the immeasurable superiority claimed for the branch from which the Prophet sprang, over the Omeyyad. These latter were now incessantly maligned by Alyites and Hashimites alike, as sprung from the enemies of Mahomet, persecutors of his descendants,—a wicked and dissolute race of tyrants, neglectful of the sanctions of Islam, given to wine

---

[1] Shia (Sheea) means "sect"; and so the sect or branch holding these views are called "Shie-ites" by the great body of the Moslems from whom they separated.

A.H. 105-125.

and hounds, music, singing and revelry, in short to every kind of profanity;—charges, indeed, for which that Dynasty had too often given good ground.

Abbasside canvass.

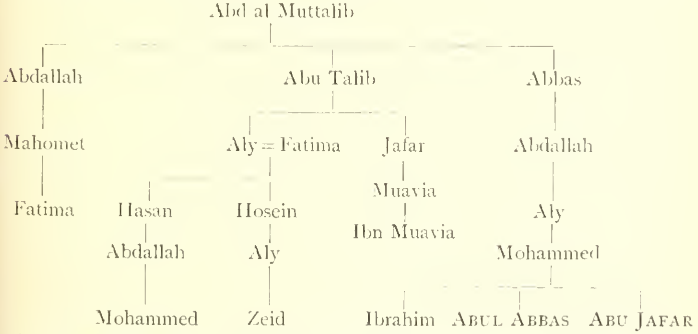
Deputations from Mohammed, who lived in a retreat south of Palestine, frequently visited Khorasan, in the garb of merchants. They plotted in secret, and though often discovered and put to a cruel death, persevered in their canvass and nursed the cause. Such emissaries burrowed busily in the purlieus of all the great towns throughout the East, and the Abbassides began to gain in name and popularity throughout Irac and Persia, as well as Khorasan.[1]

Khalid governor of Kufa, 105 A.H.

One of Hisham's first acts was to supersede Omar Ibn Hobeira in the government of Irac, to which he nominated Khalid, a favourite courtier of Yemenite descent. Ibn Hobeira met the too common fate in those days of fallen rulers, being cast into prison and tortured for arrears of revenue. He escaped, but was pursued and murdered. The Caliph caused the murderer to be put to death; but contented himself with an expression of displeasure towards Khalid, who had apparently instigated the deed. Khalid gave his brother Asad the command in Khorasan, and himself continued for fifteen years in the government

---

[1] The relation of the Shie-ite, or Alyite family, to that of the Abbassides, as descended respectively from Abbas and Abu Talib, uncles of the Prophet, will appear from this tree:—



Abul Abbas (Saffah) and Abu Jafar were the first two Abbasside Caliphs. Aly, Mohammed's father, having given offence to the Caliph Abd al Melik by marrying a wife divorced by him, and being on that account ill-treated at court, had retired to Homeima, a village on the borders of Arabia, where the alleged transfer of the Hanefite's rights is said to have taken place.

A.H. 105–125.

of Irac. Towards the end of that period there were several Kharejite outbreaks. One of these, led by a sorcerer, though followed by only a few disciples, is remarkable for certain strange doctrines, such as the divinity of Aly, held by them, as well as for their barbarous end. They were burnt to death at the stake with faggots steeped in naphtha. Another of a more serious character was raised by a man from Wasit, who declaimed against the use of wine, and denounced Khalid as "the "son of a Christian (his mother being of that faith), who "let Mosques go to ruin, while he builded churches and "synagogues, gave office to magicians, and favoured "marriage between Moslems and unbelievers." The cause was popular. Great numbers rallied under his black standard, and fought with determined bravery. Twice they routed considerable columns sent against them, and it was only by an army drawn at once from Syria, Kufa, and Mosul, that they were at last dispersed and their leader slain. Several other equally fanatical insurrections had to be put down by military force. The leader of one of these, after committing many outrages, was brought in wounded, with a body of followers. Khalid, astonished by his doctrine and knowledge of the Coran, sought to spare him: but the Caliph resented his repeated intercession; and so with his whole company the rebel was committed to the flames, all the while reciting passages from the Coran. He died with this verse on his lips: "Say, the fire of hell is fiercer in its heat, if they but knew it."[1] Such was the wild fervour of these fanatics.

Kharejite outbreaks in Irac, 118–119 A.H.

Fall of Khalid, 120 A.H. 737 A.D.

Apart from such insurrections, which in themselves caused some anxiety, Khalid, after many years of faithful service, at last lost the favour of his Master, who either suspected embezzlement, or was jealous, perhaps not without cause, of disloyal attachment to the house of Hashim.[2]

---

[1] *Sura* ix. 82.

[2] He possibly was so in reality, though not openly. When accused of partiality towards the house of Aly, and of lending them money, he answered how could that be, when every day he cursed Aly in the public prayers; but that the people said was merely to curry favour.

He therefore appointed Yusuf governor of Yemen, to succeed him. Without warning, Yusuf appeared at Kufa to Khalid's dismay, carrying with him the Caliph's command to realise with all due severity the last farthing of arrears, from "the son of the Nazarene" and his lieutenants. Yusuf was nothing loth to execute his commission; for he sorely hated Khalid as the persecutor of his clansman, Omar ibn Hobeira. It was now the turn of the officers of Khalid to be cruelly treated, and on himself a demand was made altogether beyond his power to liquidate. He was tortured (meet reward for the cruel treatment of his predecessor) and cast into prison. After a year and a half, the Caliph ordered his release, and allowed him, against the reclamations of Yusuf, to join the army then fighting against the Greeks. But in the next reign, as we shall see, he was again pursued by the relentless hate of Yusuf.

Yusuf appointed to succeed him.

The supersession of Khalid was highly unpopular, especially with the Yemenite clan in Irac. His successor Yusuf, besides being of Modhar blood, had already distinguished himself, by a tyrannous administration in south Arabia. He is praised, indeed, for restoring the prestige of Islam, and humiliating the Jewish and Christian faiths. But though devout and given to long prayers, soft in speech, and a master in poetry, Yusuf was of a cruel and even savage nature.[1] In the course of his inquiries he discovered that Khalid had made over large sums of money

---

[1] For example, he was capricious about his garments, and chastised the tailor if they were not fitting to his taste. He would draw his nail across the stuff, and if it stuck anywhere, have the weaver beaten, or even his hand cut off. His Secretary one day, slack at work, complained of toothache as the cause; the barber removed the suffering tooth, and the next also as a punishment. One of the tales passes belief. Preparing for a journey, he asked one of his slave-girls whether she wished to follow; on her answering in the affirmative, he abused her as thinking of nothing but love, and had her beheaded: a second, preferring to stay with her child, shared the same fate. A third replied in terror that she knew not what to say, as either way she must give offence, and for presuming thus to argue, she too was beheaded. The currency of such tales, even if not actually founded on fact, shows what a tyrant they had to deal with, and also throws a lurid light on the habits and morals of the day.

A.H. 105–125.

Zeid, grandson of Hosein, aspires to Caliphate.

to Zeid a grandson of Hosein, suspected of pretensions to the throne. The Caliph summoned him to his presence, and, dissatisfied with his attitude, sent him for further inquiry to Yusuf. Zeid, however, managed to retire into privacy, and canvassed the Arab tribes in Irac, living now with one and now with another, and ingratiating himself especially by frequent matrimonial alliances with maidens of the Yemen line.[1] He soon accepted homage as the rightful Caliph from thousands in Kufa and its vicinity, with the pledge to fight under his banner. This went on for months. At last his followers urged him, "now "that the full time had come for the downfall of the "Omeyyad house," no longer to delay. It is significant of the yet undefined relation of the two branches of the Hashimite stock,—the descendants of Aly and those of Abbas,—that Daud, one of the latter, sought to dissuade him from a step so premature. He bid him not to trust in his twenty, or even forty, thousand;[2] "for think," he said, "how many of the 80,000 fickle Kufans pledged to fight "for Hosein, stood by him in the hour of need?" The advice was good, but unheeded. In one respect the theocratic zealots were dissatisfied with Zeid; for, like Zobeir, he declined to say that Abu Bekr and Omar were usurpers of the Caliphate. Apart, however, from any such scruples, the light-hearted and pleasure-loving Kufans were hardly prepared for a serious rising. They were ready enough to covenant, but lacked the covenanting spirit. At last Zeid fixed the day. Secret information reached Yusuf, who, from his palace in the vicinity of Hira, gave command for the Citizens to be gathered, both for safety and

His rebellion at Kufa, 122 A.H. 740 A.D.

---

[1] The names of two are given. A charming lady, but of mature years, came to do homage as an ardent Shie-ite; and Zeid, her age notwithstanding, asked her to be his bride. Excusing herself on her being no longer young, she suggested that her daughter, fairer and more elegant than she, would be more suitable. Zeid laughed, and was well pleased to accept the daughter in her stead.

[2] The numbers are variously given at from 15,000 to 40,000. These all took an oath "to set up the Book and the testimony and godly discipline, to "follow the descendants of the Prophet, and to fight against their enemies "both in secret and in public." Whereupon the covenanter placed his hand within Zeid's, and the obligation and homage were complete.

A.H. 105–125.

lest perchance they too might rise, into the court of the great Mosque. During the night the Shie-ite banner paraded the city, with the old battle-cry, *Ya Mansur!* In the early morning, Zeid issued forth, expecting to find a multitude ready to salute him. There were but 218. Nevertheless, he made his progress through the streets, driving the police and soldiery before him, from quarter to quarter, but with little other result. He was watched by Yusuf and the chief men of Kufa from afar. "Where "are my men," he cried, "the 40,000 men that pledged "their troth to me?" but none responded to the martial call. A follower answered, more sanguine than the rest, "They are shut up within the Mosque; let us march and "set them free." Arrived there, they waved their banners high over the gates, and shouted, "Come from shame to "glory; come forth for this world, and also for the next; "of neither have ye yet any part or lot!" But the answer was only a shower of stones. Darkness coming on, Zeid retired to the great storehouse of the city, where with his little company he passed the night. Next morning he was attacked by a Syrian column, which he bravely met, and killing seventy drove them back from place to place. So passed the day; but as night set in, an arrow struck him on the temple. He was carried to the house of a follower, where, so soon as the arrow was withdrawn, he died. They buried him secretly; but Yusuf discovering the place, sent the head to Hisham, and had the body, with those of the other leaders, hung up in a public place. The head was stuck for a time on one of the gates of Damascus, and then sent to be similarly exhibited at Medina. The body remained exposed at Kufa till Welid II, on his accession, had it taken down and burned.

Defeated and slain.

This emeute, though apparently unimportant in itself, proved the turning-point in the destiny of the house of Aly. Although Yahya, the son of Zeid, escaped, to the Caliph's great mortification, the Shie-ite cause had hopelessly collapsed. Up to this time, the aspiration of the Abbassides, as descendants of the Prophet's uncle, had paled before that of the Alyites, in whose veins ran the

Abbasside way cleared thereby.

A.H. 105-125.

blood of the Prophet himself. The Hashimite interest in the impending canvass now centred in the Abbassides alone, and they were able to enter upon it with invigorated hope and redoubled effort. The Omeyyads could have done their antagonists no better service than thus rid them of such dangerous rivals in the struggle for the throne.[1]

Various campaigns in Khorasan.

Asad, brother of Khalid, 105-109.

Throughout the twenty years of this reign, the Moslem arms suffered many reverses beyond the Oxus, where things at the last remained pretty much as at the first. Asad had been early appointed by his brother Khalid as lieutenant there, but he was a tyrant, and having inflicted chastisement on certain leading men who had incurred his displeasure, was recalled. During this period, the Khâcân with his hordes kept the country in chronic disquiet; and there was at least one serious defeat, the Moslem host being surrounded for many days, and with difficulty effecting its escape. An emeute also, causing some anxiety, broke out in the East, between the Yemen and Modhar tribes, which ended, not without bloodshed, in favour of the latter. Ashras, the new governor, threw the entire country of Bokhara and Soghd into rebellion by his breach of faith, in first promising remission of the capitation-tax for all who embraced Islam, and then by reimposing it. The rebels were supported by the Khâcân, and the Moslems suffered greatly at his hands.[2] In 111 A.H., to better

Ashras, 109-111 A.H.

---

[1] It is true that there was extant another branch descended from Aly, the progeny namely of Hasan, brother of Hosein; but like Hasan himself, who resigned the Caliphate into the hands of Muavia, they had but little ambition. An amusing, but not very edifying, account is preserved of a disputation held before Khalid (who is supposed to have had Shie-ite leanings) between Zeid as descendant of *Hosein*, and the head of the house of *Hasan*, who both, in gross Arab style, fell to abusing each other's mothers. But the descendants of Hasan never seem as yet to have taken any practical step as aspirants to the throne.

[2] For example, Kamanja, "one of the greatest cities in Khorasan, and full of Mussulmans," was besieged by the Khâcân for fifty-eight days with innumerable hordes drawn from Ferghana, Nasaf, and the country all around Bokhara. A chief having been killed by an arrow from the battlements, the Turks slew the Mussulman prisoners, 100 in number, and cast their heads over the wall into the citadel, on which the Moslems in revenge slew 200 hostages in their hands. At last, driven to extremities for water, the siege was raised on condition that the Moslems should retire.

matters, Joneid was brought over from Sind;[1] but though an able warrior, he was less fortunate even than his predecessor. On his way to join the army at Bokhara, he narrowly escaped capture by the Khâcân. In the following year, marching on Takharistan, he received an alarming message from Saurat, governor of Samarcand, that the Khâcân had surrounded the city, which, being from its great circuit beyond his power to defend, he must at all hazards, if not quickly relieved, go out and fight the enemy. Joneid resolved on marching to his relief, but the forces under his command being scattered about in all directions, he had but an inadequate column with which, against the reclamation of his officers, he at once set out. When about half-way, he was surrounded by the hordes of the Khâcân, and the battle raged with terrible slaughter. Prodigies of valour, as of old, held the enemy at bay. One who had just returned from pilgrimage to Mecca, where he besought his mother to pray that he might be blessed with martyrdom, and had with the same object lavished charity, obtained now the longed-for prize. Another, while the fight was hot, returned to prepare his wife for his being brought in all gory from the battle: rending her garments, she exclaimed in agony, "Ah why, leaving "thine earthly love, wilt thou seek the embrace of the "Houris in Paradise?" Heedless of her cry, he hastened back to the field, and met the fate he coveted. Joneid was in despair; he called his cavalry to dismount, and they fought fiercely hand to hand with the barbarians. Eighteen leaders bearing the great banner, fell one after another, and the dead were strewed over the field in hundreds. At last he retired to a defile, threw up entrenchments, and called a council of war. "Either thou must perish," they said, "or Saurat." So he sent messengers to Saurat ordering him to march out of Samarcand, and so draw off the enemy. Saurat remonstrated against the mad attempt; but on Joneid angrily threatening to supersede him by one

Joneid succeeds.

Samarcand attacked by the Khâcân, 112 A.H.

Joneid sacrifices Saurat and garrison of Samarcand.

---

[1] Joneid owed his promotion (easy way of earning a command) to offering the wife of Hisham a rare and costly piece of Indian jewelry, which Hisham admired so much that Joneid presented another like it to him.

A.H. 105–125.

Saurat sacrificed by Joneid.

who was his bitter enemy, he issued forth with 12,000 men. After a long march, when close to Joneid, the Khâcân turned upon him, and a fierce encounter ensued. The day was hot, and the Turks set fire to the dry jungle behind. Saurat resolved on a dash through the enemy's host, hoping thus to reach Joneid's camp now close at hand. The Khâcân giving way, drew him into the midst of the burning grass, hidden by the clouds of dust raised by his horse. There, part enveloped in the flames, and part slain by the sword, ten or eleven thousand perished. The remnant escaped to a supposed friendly Chieftain, who betrayed them to the Khâcân. They were all but seventeen cruelly massacred; and in the end, but three out of the 12,000 got safely away. While thus sacrificing Saurat, Joneid seized the opportunity to emerge from his retreat; but, endangered by the flaming jungle, he again retired, and then the Khâcân came down upon him. In this strait, he proclaimed that if the slaves of his camp would fight with him, they should have their liberty; and they did fight with such prodigious bravery, that Joneid was able to force his way to Samarcand. He had not, however, been long there when tidings came that the Khâcân now threatened Bokhara. So leaving a garrison behind, he fought his way back again, carrying with him the families of the annihilated force, who were sent safely on to Merve. The Caliph was deeply affected by the loss of Saurat and his army; and reinforced Joneid with five-and-twenty thousand troops from Irac.[1]

Joneid forces his way to Samarcand, ix. 112 A.H.

Trans-oxiana, 113–115. A.H.

With the help of these reinforcements and the able generals with whom he surrounded himself, Joneid succeeded during the next two or three years in restoring order beyond the Oxus.[2] But he had no sooner done so than (such was the caprice of the rulers of the day) he was ignominiously deposed for no other reason than that he had married a daughter of the rebel Zeid son of Mohallab; and Asim, an enemy of his, was appointed in his place. Joneid at the moment lay sick of a fatal illness; but Hisham was so enraged at the alliance he had formed, that, aware of his condition, he bade Asim, if breath still remained, to put the dying man to torture. Death happily released Joneid from the hands of the new Governor, who vented his spleen, according to the wont of the day, on those who had held office under his unfortunate predecessor.

---

[1] The campaign of Joneid is told with much fervour by the historians: prodigies were seen in the sky at the battle of the defile, a pavilion in the heavens, smell of musk on the field of the slain, etc. Joneid, in reporting his defeat to Hisham, laid the blame on Saurat for not staying, as he had ordered him, by the stream which lay between them: but it would seem unjustly.

[2] Above all others Joneid knew how to select his men, and his Generals are described as masters of war each in his own department.

Fall of Joneid, 116 A.H.

As one result of this harsh treatment, a leader named Harith raised the standard of revolt, with the Kharejite cry, "To the law and to the testimony and the will of the people." He possessed himself of Balkh and all the surrounding country. Then followed by 60,000 Arabs, chiefly of Azd and Temîm descent, he unwisely advanced on Merve, where deserted by many of his followers, he suffered defeat and loss, and with the remnant was forced to recross the Oxus. Notwithstanding, several thousand Arabs still followed his banner, and the provinces in Central Asia, owing to the inaction of Asim, remained long in a state of open revolt.

Rebellion of Harith.

After a year of misgovernment and mishap, Asim was deposed, and Asad again appointed to Khorasan.[1] His hand was soon felt in the reduction of the country, and the defeat of Harith and other rebellious leaders. The followers of Harith came to a grievous end. A party of his relatives and their dependants were by Asad's troops captured in a fort, and sold, noble-born Arabs with the rest, as slaves to the highest bidder in the bazaar of Balkh. In another fortress, 450 dying of thirst had to surrender at discretion. The chiefest of these, fifty in number, were beheaded. The rest were, by Asad's order, divided into three lots, of which one was slain, a second had hands and legs both cut off, while the third their hands only. Such was the barbarity of Asad. Harith himself effected his

Asad reappointed, 117 A.H.

---

[1] The appointment of Viceroy was in the gift of his brother Khalid, governor of Irac. Khorasan seems sometimes to have been thus immediately under Irac, at others administered direct from Damascus.

escape; and (a thing hitherto unheard of in Islam) joined himself to the pagan Turk.

Balkh made capital of Central Asia, 118 A.H. 736 A.D.

Balkh, which must have suffered badly throughout the insurrection, was now rebuilt and beautified by Barmek (father of the Barmecides) and a cantonment laid out in its vicinity.[1] An exchequer, with offices of civil and military administration, was established at this new Capital; and thus Central Asia settled down at last into comparative order. Asad now set on foot a campaign into Khottal, which the Khâcân hearing of, marched, with Harith in his train, upon Balkh. He had surprised Asad's advanced column, taking the camp with much spoil and all the women, when Asad came up just in time to save the force from being cut to pieces, and a parley ensued. The Khâcân, interpreted through one of Harith's followers, charged Asad with the lust of conquest in seeking to wrest from him Khottal, which had been his people's for generations past: "Rest satisfied," he said, "with what is beyond "the river to the south, for that alone is yours." The conference ended without result; and Asad, not prepared for battle, retired to winter at Balkh, and the Khâcân to Takharistan.

Asad beats Khâcân and Harith, 119 A.H.

In the following spring Asad went forth again with a strong army, completely routed the Khâcân, and rescued from captivity all the Moslem prisoners, male and female. The enemy fled to Takharistan, from whence the Khâcân, supported by Harith, was about to attack Samarcand, when he was waylaid and killed by one of his chiefs with whom he had a quarrel. The joy at Damascus was unbounded. Hisham refused to believe the good tidings till confirmed by a second messenger; and then he prostrated himself in thanksgiving before the Lord.

Death of Asad. Nasr pacifies Transoxiana, 120 A.H.

In the following year Asad died, fortunately just before the fall of his brother Khalid, or he would have shared in the evils that befel him.[2] Nasr, who succeeded, was a wise and able ruler. He carried his arms into Ferghana.

---

[1] The troops had previously been cantoned at Barucan, two parasangs off.

[2] The immediate cause of his death was indulgence in pears, brought as a rare present from Herat,—the first apparently which the Moslem had seen.

A.H. 105–125.

The task was now comparatively easy; for since the fall of the Khâcân, the Turcoman hordes had broken up into parties, which offered no effective resistance. By the promulgation of a general amnesty, the Soghdians were brought back to their allegiance. And so after having been for so many years harassed by rapine and war, the provinces in Central Asia at last enjoyed repose.

Sind and India, 107 A.H. 725 A.D.

In Sind and Western India there is little to record of progress during the present reign. Joneid, the governor, afterwards transferred to Merve, made some successful raids in the East; but he injured the Moslem name by warring against Jeishaba, an Indian prince, who, notwithstanding his profession of the faith, was made prisoner in a sea-fight and put to death. His brother set out for Kufa to lodge complaint against this unjust attack, when he too was caught on the way in the tyrant's toils and put to death. The result of such treatment was that under his successor, a general revolt arose against a rule hateful to the Indians; and so it became necessary to found in the tract bordering on the Indus, two strongly fortified garrisons, *Mahfuzah* and *Mansurah*.[1] By these the surrounding country was long held in check, and forward movement made into the rich provinces of the Deccan.

Asia Minor.

Against the Greeks there was as usual a yearly campaign. The Byzantine empire being at this time weakened by opposition to the iconoclastic energy of Leo, the Moslems were, upon the whole, more successful here than elsewhere. But fortune was varied by severe reverses; and on one occasion a whole column of 1000 men was cut to pieces. Battâl, a famous general, took captive a Greek prince, who was sent to Jerusalem, and there, an unwonted sight, allowed to walk abroad.[2] After a famous career, in

Battâl, a famous general, killed, 123 A.H

---

[1] That is, the *Protected* and the *Victorious*.

[2] The sight, however, might not have been so unwonted, as pilgrims still flocked thither from the West, though clad, no doubt, in pilgrim garb, and therefore not distinguishable in race or rank. The Greek prince is named Constantine, afterwards Emperor; but, as the Byzantine authors say nothing, it must surely have been some less notable person.

Of Battâl marvellous stories are told. Falling sick on a journey, he was carried insensible into a convent, and tended by a nun. A neighbouring

A.H. 105–125.

which Battâl struck such terror throughout Asia Minor that mothers used to frighten their crying children by his name, he lost his life in a serious defeat.

Armenia and Caspian border. Jarrah and his army slain, 112 A.H.

In Armenia, the conquests already achieved were retained with difficulty and not without some terrible disasters. Peace had been restored and the country to the shore of the Caspian made tributary, when war again broke out, and Jarrah, the commander (who had been removed from Khorasan) was overtaken by hordes of Turcomans, and with his whole army destroyed. A new levy was forthwith despatched, swelled by Ghazies on its way. The calamity was thus retrieved; after repeated engagements, the Khizrs were driven back, and the family of Jarrah and other Moslem ladies recovered. Maslama, then sent by his brother to take the command, ravaged the country north as far as Derbend, when he too was surrounded by Turcomans, and in the ignominious flight lost his life. The Mesopotamian border was by this defeat so seriously threatened, that Merwan,[1] who was with the discomfited army, hastened in person to inform his cousin Hisham of the disaster. A great army of 120,000 men was gathered from every quarter, with which Merwan, appointed to the command, beat back the enemy, and recovered the country as far as the Caspian Sea. The chief of the Turcomans now submitted to the terms imposed by Merwan. These among other things included the tribute of 1000 head of cattle, 500 slaves, and 500 "black-haired" girls, the first of the fair Circassian maidens that were in the future so plentifully to grace the Harems of the East. In 118, and again 122 A.H., Merwan carried the Moslem arms against the hordes to the south of the Caspian as far as Tabaristan, thus effecting a junction with Khorasan. But beyond successful raids and siege

Maslama.

Merwan's victories, 118–122 A.H.

Patrician, angry at her attention to a Mussulman, was set upon by Battâl, who singly put his whole retinue to flight, slew the Patrician, cast his head into the convent, and carried the whole body of nuns to the army. He married the nun who had tended him, and she was known long after as "the mother of Battâl's children."

[1] Grandson of Merwan I, and nephew of Abd al Melik; afterwards Merwan II, and last of the Omeyyads.

A.H. 105–125.

of towns, with the slaughter of men and slavery of women falling into the Conqueror's hands, little further is to tell.

Reverses in Africa, 116–124 A.H.

More serious were the disasters in Africa and Spain, where the Moslem arms not only suffered frequent defeat, but, worse than all, the bond of subjection to Damascus became daily weaker. In the year 116 A.H. there was a general rising of the Berbers along the coast of Africa, caused partly by the reimposition of taxes on the Moslem converts, as though they had been heathen, and partly by the outbreak of new Kharejite factions.[1] The loyalist armies were again and again beaten with great loss, and victory in the end hardly won. A famous battle, known as "the Field of idols," was fought a few miles from Cairowan, 117 A.H., against 300,000 Berbers; the issue, long doubtful, was at last gained by the Arabs, urged forward by the "Readers," and cries of the women from fear of the fate that might await them.[2] The western provinces of Africa continued all in uproar till 124 A.H., when the governor of Egypt was sent to stem the insurrection, and peace was at last restored. During this period the navy was not inactive. In the year 111 A.H., a descent was made on Sicily, and great spoil brought back; but three years after, the fleet was wrecked, when the Admiral, for exposing it to the winter storms, was cast into prison and publicly beaten in the streets of Cairowan. In 117 A.H., Sardinia was ravaged; and in 122, Sicily was again invaded, and Syracuse laid under tribute. A project set on foot for reducing the island was dropped, owing to the troubled state of Africa.

Spain.

Spain, as a dependency of Africa, was closely affected

---

[1] A new branch arose, called from its founder Soffarides. These and the other sects that swarmed along the coast recognised the claim neither of the Hashimites nor of any other branch to the Caliphate, but were pure Theocrats, or it may be Socialists.

[2] "180,000 were counted on the battlefield; there was no such battle since the days of Bedr as the battle of the Field of idols." Another engagement was named "the battle of the Nobles, from the vast number of Arab chiefs slain in it." It would be unprofitable to follow these campaigns further in their wearisome and often fabulous detail.

A.H. 105–125. Spain.

by the insurrection there, and by the constant change of Governors. It was also distracted by the disloyalty of the Berber population, which streamed across the strait, vastly outnumbering the Arabs, who, as elsewhere, were divided among themselves by their chronic tribal enmity. Elements of trouble thus rife all round, produced the natural result of disorder and revolt.

Campaign in France, 107 A.H. 725 A.D.

Anbasa, appointed to the government of the Peninsula early in this reign, occupied himself at first in restoring order within its bounds. Afterwards he crossed the Pyrenees, with the view of restoring the shattered prestige of the Moslem arms in France. Carcassone was stormed; Nismes fell into his hands; the south of France was overrun; and the Churches and Convents were despoiled. Shortly after, he was killed; and the restless state of Spain prevented further action for the time. Some six years after, Abd al Rahman, again appointed to command, renewed offensive operations, and chastised Abu-nesa, an Arab chief, who had joined Count Eudo.[1] In the following year he marched to the North with an enormous force, and overran the land as far as Poitiers. It was then that Charles Martel, in answer to the bitter cry of Eudo for help, hurried south to stem the sweeping Moslem wave. Between Tours and Poitiers the armies met; the day was hotly contested, but at last the invaders were driven back and fled in confusion, leaving Abd al Rahman dead upon the field. Next morning, the Conqueror, ready to renew the contest, found not a single soldier within sight; all had disappeared.[2] The fate of France, perhaps of Christendom, hung on the issue of that day. And in God's good providence Christendom was saved.

Abd al Rahman, 113 A.H. Overthrown by Charles Martel, ix. 114 A.H. Oct. 732 A.D.

Further campaign in France, 116–119 A.H. 734–737 A.D.

Two years later, Ocba son of Hajjâj returned to the charge, and effecting a junction with a body of Frank nobles hostile to Eudo, again invaded France. Arles, Avignon, and other places were surrendered into his hands,

---

[1] Abu-nesa is changed by European writers to Munuza.

[2] Ramzan 114 A.H., or Oct. 732 A.D. The victory is ascribed to the Franks finding their way to the enemy's camp, when the invaders, fearing the loss of their spoil, hurried back to save it.

Valencia and Lyons besieged, Burgundy and Dauphiné ravaged all along the Rhone. But Charles Martel, freed now from the Saxon war, again came to the rescue, reconquered Avignon, and drove the Arabs back as far as Narbonne. Hostages were then taken from the disloyal Chiefs of southern France, binding them not again to make common cause with the enemy. Ocba died soon after, in the midst of Spanish anarchy. One general after another usurped command. The Berbers sought to be independent of the Arabs, and the Arabs were split up amongst themselves. Order was not restored till after the death of Hisham. Meanwhile the Christians in the mountainous regions of the North, profiting by misrule elsewhere, maintained their independence.[1]

Misrule in Spain.

Such was the long and chequered reign of Hisham; a reign, with all his demerits,—if we except occasional outbreaks of cruel tyranny,—one of the most exemplary of the Caliphate either before or after. It was not his fault that the Empire, already undermined, continued sinking. Abbasside emissaries on the one hand, and Kharejite theocrats on the other, labouring in the dark, left no stone unturned to overthrow the Dynasty, casting the blackest and often undeserved obloquy upon it. His virtues failed to arrest the downward progress. The archives of State were during his reign kept with a scrupulous care unequalled in any other. There was no extravagance, and he left the imperial treasury full. Indeed, it was unwillingness to scatter largesses, and parsimony degenerating often into a mean and miserly habit, that injured his popularity and impaired his influence.[2] As an instance of his justice, he refused to let a Christian be punished for having chastised a Moslem servant, and chided his son for urging it. Scandalised at

Hisham's just reign.

---

[1] As regards the invasion of France, the Arabian authorities are very brief. I have borrowed largely from Weil and Reinaud.

[2] As a specimen of his meanness, a man is said once to have brought as an offering two rare and beautiful birds, expecting a present in return. "What shall I give thee?" said the Caliph. "Whatever thou pleasest," he replied. "Then take one of the birds for thine own." He chose the most beautiful. "So thou art leaving me the worst of the two," said the Caliph; "I will keep them both." And he ordered him the shabby gift of a few silver pieces.

Dissolute character of Welid, heir-apparent.

the dissolute character of his nephew Welid, the Heir-apparent, who even on the pilgrimage to Mecca indulged in wine and hounds,—abomination to the true believer,[1]—he had some thoughts of superseding him by his own son, till he found that he was little better. Welid was not only intemperate in his life, but impatient of control, and insolent in his attitude towards his Uncle; and so leaving the Court, he betook himself to a country retreat in Palestine. Hisham removed from him his evil advisers, and imprisoned his secretary, after inflicting stripes upon him. Welid, resenting the indignity, addressed the Caliph a satire breathing hatred and contempt. He remained in his retreat during the rest of his uncle's reign.

Hisham refrained from reviling Aly.

When Hisham was on pilgrimage, the year after his accession, he refrained in the public services from the customary imprecation on the name of Aly. He was urged by one of Othman's descendants to resume it; —"This is the Holy place," he said, "and it becomes "the Commander of the Faithful to rescue the memory "of the murdered Caliph here." Hisham, displeased at his words, replied,—"I came not here to speak ill of "any one, nor to curse; but to perform the rites of Pil-"grimage." On another occasion having unadvisedly reviled a Courtier, he was much distressed, and humbly made apology. Although thus in general disposition mild and upright, the reader will remember instances in which he was severe and cruel, not to say unjust, towards lieutenants who had fallen under his displeasure. One heretic he caused to be put to death for denying that the Coran was uncreate. Another, who rejected the doctrine of inspiration, was by his command impaled after his limbs had first been cut asunder. There is the less doubt about such accounts, for though handed down by the unfriendly pen of Abbasside writers, they would be regarded by most

Occasional acts of cruelty.

---

[1] This was nine years before Hisham's death. The wild youth had even thought of pitching a pavilion hard by the Kaaba wherein to have a carousal with his boon companions; but was dissuaded from the mad design. The tale is almost incredible, and may have been invented or coloured by Abbasside historians, always ready to blacken this dynasty. But no doubt he was bad enough.

believers as not discreditable to the Omeyyad race, but rather as meritorious acts of faith.

Death of Hisham, iv. 125 A.H. Feb. 743 A.D.

Damascus was much exposed to epidemic plague, and to avoid contagion the Caliphs with their families were in the habit of seeking the purer air of the Desert. Such favourite retreat was Rusâfa, a city adorned with Roman buildings near to Kinnisrin. There Hisham spent much of his time; and there he died of quinsy in the 20th year of his reign, aged 56.

CHAPTER LVI

WELID II, AND YEZID III

125–126 A.H. 743–744 A.D.

125 A.H. 743 A.D.

THE two brief following reigns contributed nothing but disaster to the Omeyyad cause and to the Empire at large.

Accession of Welid II.

Tidings of his Uncle's death were received by Welid with indecent delight. Notorious profligacy and incapacity notwithstanding, he succeeded without opposition to the throne. He made haste to send and seize the property of the late Caliph's relatives and favourites, and to treat them with every indignity. Hisham's son Soleiman was beaten, shaven, exiled, and cast into prison. The well-filled treasury was quickly emptied by the new Caliph's largesses to his courtiers and increased pay to the soldiery. Such free hand, and a generous provision for the blind and infirm, gained for him a certain degree of popularity. But his intemperate and dissolute life caused great scandal throughout the nation. Besides such conventional profanities as wine, music, and hounds, his debauched habits alienated from him the regard of all the better classes. He was accused of tampering with the virtue of his predecessor's Harem, and even darker vices were bruited abroad. To make matters worse, he appointed two sons of tender age his successors, and any who refused the oath of allegiance were imprisoned. The discontent rose to such a pitch, that even the Omeyyads plotted against him and encouraged Yezid, another grandson of Abd al Melik, to seek his downfall.

Dissolute and profane.

Khalid, the former governor of Kufa, having escaped

A.H. 125–126.

Khalid tortured to death by Yusuf.

the tyranny of Yusuf, was now living at Damascus. Loyal to the Throne, he refused to join the conspirators: and fearing that the Caliph might be waylaid on an intended pilgrimage to Mecca, dissuaded him from attempting the journey. The Caliph, angry because Khalid did not tell him more of the suspected intrigues abroad, and also declined to do homage to his sons, had him beaten and cast into prison; and he further revived against him the demand for arrears of revenue which Hisham had allowed to drop. Yusuf, still bent on the ruin of Khalid, now saw his opportunity, and visiting Damascus with large gifts for the Court, "bought" his victim from Welid at the price of these arrears, amounting to fifty million of pieces. The unfortunate Khalid was then carried back to Kufa, where he expired under the barbarous treatment of Yusuf, and was buried with indignity.[1]

Yezid, son of Welid I, rebels against Welid II, vi. 126 A.H. April 744 A.D.

The treatment of Khalid kindled the indignation of the Yemen stock from which he sprang. Verses taunting these with cowardice in suffering their kinsman to be thus trampled under foot, were freely circulated, and roused intense excitement against the Caliph. His cousin Yezid, son of Welid I, had by this time gained a large following. Abbas his brother, and also Merwan, commanding in Armenia, both endeavoured to dissuade him from his traitorous design, which they foresaw must hasten the downfall of their Dynasty. But he persisted; and now supported by the Yemenite malcontents, who flocked around and saluted him as Caliph, he raised the standard of rebellion, and marched upon Damascus. The Court and chief officers were mostly away in the country to avoid the pestilential air of the Capital, and so Yezid easily possessed himself of the treasury. Then with its contents, having bribed the soldiery, he despatched a body of troops against Welid. The wretched Caliph, enjoying for the moment a retreat in the south of Syria, with but a

---

[1] See above, p. 397. According to some traditions, he had his legs broken, and the rack drawn over his chest, under which he died. His mother was a captive Greek who never embraced Islam. Khalid had built a church or convent for her, which made him unpopular with strict believers.

A.H. 125-126.

small following for his defence, took refuge in a neighbouring fortress. Abbas was on his way to support the Caliph, when he was taken by the rebels and forced to join his brother's standard. Welid at first sought to parley with his enemies, who would not listen, but covered him with reproaches for his ungodly life. He then issued forth and fought bravely, but was forced by overpowering numbers back into the fort. There he took the Coran into his hands and began to read its pages, saying—"It is this day, as it was in the day of Othman," and so was slain. His head was carried to Yezid, and by him paraded in the streets of Damascus. He had reigned but little more than a year.

Welid II slain.

Yezid III, vi. 126 A.H. April 744 A.D.

Yezid III now ascended his ill-gotten throne. From the first he had serious difficulties to contend with. Owing his victory to the Yemenites or Southerners, the Modhar (or "northern") tribes were naturally his enemies, and moreover, the murdered Caliph came of their stock on the mother's side. Though not a profane person, like his predecessor, he was obnoxious to the Orthodox, because he denied the doctrine of predestination. The people at large, accustomed to the sacredness of the Caliph's person, were shocked at the murder and sufferings of Welid; while the army murmured at the withdrawal of the increase lately granted, which the failing treasury rendered it impossible to continue. The inhabitants of Hims, stirred by the wailing of the late Caliph's household domiciled there, plundered the house of Yezid's brother Abbas, and outraged the sanctity of his Harem. Gaining over the troops, they then set out, with the cry of revenge for the blood of Welid, to attack Damascus. Yezid on this despatched two strong columns under his brother Masrur, and Soleiman son of Hashim, who having escaped from confinement had joined the new Caliph. These met the insurgents a few miles from the Capital, and after a severe engagement, put them to flight; upon which the oath of allegiance to Yezid was taken both at Hims and Damascus. Soon after a still more serious rising took place in Palestine, which required an army of 80,000 to

Fighting at the capital and in Palestine.

A.H. 125-126.

put down, as well as promise of office and largess to the rebel leaders. Such were the weakness and confusion into which the body politic now had fallen.

Troubles at Kufa.

In Irac things were not much better. Kufa was glad to be rid of the tyrant Yusuf, who fled for his life to Syria. Arrested there in woman's disguise, he was cast with contumely into prison. His successor was hated as a godless man sharing the Caliph's heretical opinions. Yezid was therefore obliged to remove him and send in his place Ibn Omar, son of the pious Caliph, saying that the Kufans would surely reverence him for his father's sake. But troubles continued to break out, and uproar between the discordant tribes in Syria and Irac.

Khorasan: Abbasside canvass.

While authority was thus relaxed at home, the outlying provinces had it much their own way. Khorasan especially was in a state of unrest, and strange apprehensions were abroad of coming change. Mohammed, the Abbasside pretender, had died the year before, aged 73;[1] and now his son Ibrahim, who succeeded as "Imam," sent a deputation, with tidings of his Father's death, to his adherents, who formed a strong and increasing body at Merve. These kissed the testament in which Ibrahim was named successor, and forwarded to him large offerings, which they had gathered for his house. But as yet the canvass was concealed from public view.

Nasr holds on there.

Nasr still held the Viceroyalty there. Welid, in his wild caprice, had directed Yusuf to summon him to Court with a rich assortment of gold and silver vessels, falcons, palfreys, games, and every kind of musical instrument, and with a following of maidens also. Nasr obeyed, but, foreseeing storms, journeyed slowly; and so, before he reached Irac, getting tidings of Yezid's rebellion, he returned to Merve. The new governor of Kufa sought to supersede him by a creature of his own; but Nasr would not give way, and so succeeded in holding on. To lighten his treasury, a dangerous temptation for the rebels all around him, he distributed the vast

---

[1] See table at p. 395. His father Aly died seven years before.

A.H. 125-126.

store of precious things and slave-girls, gathered for Welid, among his own family and retainers, as well as in payment of the troops. The old feud of Modhar and Yemen was, however, continually breaking out afresh. The Yemenites were at this time headed by one called (from his birthplace) Kirmany, and riots and fighting prevailed between the two clans. Nasr, who belonged to the Modharite faction, was hard pressed by the other. Things were composed for a time; but Nasr had dark days before him.

Nasr in the East.

Harith returns to his confreres.

It was at this juncture that Harith, who having gone over as a pervert to the Khâcân, had been fighting under the Turcoman banner against his fellows, returned. At the instance of Nasr, who, surrounded by enemies, feared his hostility and that of the Turks, he was pardoned by the Caliph and allowed, after having for twelve years fought on the enemy's side, to come back and resume his position among his brethren; a singular instance of condonation of an apostate's crime. We shall hear more of him hereafter.[1]

Merwan attacks Yezid III.

Yezid was at last to be threatened by an enemy far more formidable than any that had hitherto appeared. This was Merwan, grandson of Merwan I, and conqueror of the Caucasus, the same who had vainly sought to dissuade him from his treason against Welid. Merwan's son, on returning from the summer campaign in Asia Minor, found Mesopotamia in confusion, took possession of Harran, and wrote to his father urging him to hasten and avenge the blood of Welid. Merwan set out for Armenia, and from Harran despatched an army against Damascus. The Caliph in alarm meanwhile sent to offer terms;—he would continue Merwan as Viceroy of all the provinces which his father and he had held, including Mesopotamia, Armenia, Mosul and Azerbijan. Merwan accepted the offer, and did allegiance to Yezid.

Compromise between them.

---

[1] I remember no other instance of a Moslem joining the ranks of a Pagan enemy. On returning, Harith expressed his penitence, saying that during these twelve years he never had a moment's peace till he was received back into the bosom of Islam.

Towards the close of the year, Yezid fell sick, and in anticipation of decease was persuaded by his heretic friends to appoint his brother Ibrahim, also an adherent of the Free-will doctrine, as successor. Shortly after he died at Damascus, aged forty-six, having reigned but six months. His mother was the granddaughter of Yezdegird, brought as a captive maid from Khorasan.[1]

A.H. 125-126.

Death of Yezid III, xii. 126 A.H. Oct. 744 A.D.

---

[1] Her great-grandmother was a daughter of the Kaiser, married to the Chosroes, and also descended from a daughter of one of the Khâcâns, so that she had thus the blood of all three potentates in her veins. Yezid used therefore to sing:—

> "I am the son of Chosroes; my father was Merwan:
> The Kaiser was my ancestor, and so was the Khâcân."

CHAPTER LVII

IBRAHIM AND MERWAN II, LAST OF THE OMEYYADS

126–130 A.H. 744–748 A.D.

Ibrahim's partial succession, 126 A.H. 744 A.D.

IBRAHIM can hardly be said to have succeeded his brother Yezid. He assumed indeed the government at Damascus, and held it for three or four months. He was addressed by some as Caliph, by others only as Ameer. No general homage was done to him. It seems to have been felt that he had no proper hold on the Caliphate, as events, in point of fact, did soon determine.

Merwan advances on Damascus.

For Merwan, immediately on receiving tidings of Yezid's decease, started from Harran, his residence in Mesopotamia, with a heavy force for Syria. At Kinnisrin, the Modharite party gave up two brothers of the late Caliph who were in command there, and joined his standard. Strengthened by their adherence, he advanced on Hims, which refusing to acknowledge Ibrahim, had been invested by his troops. Raising the siege, and with an army now of 80,000 men, he continued his march upon the Capital. A force had already started from thence to stay his approach. It was commanded by Soleiman son of Hisham, and composed chiefly of the Yemenite and other adherents of the late Caliph, numbered 120,000 men. Merwan's ranks, however, were full of veterans used to the field. They met in a valley between Baalbec and Damascus. Merwan demanded of his enemy the release of two sons of Welid, now in confinement at Damascus, promising that if this were done, he would spare all those concerned in their father's death. It was refused, and the armies joined battle.

A.H. 126–130.

They fought all day, but Merwan, used to warlike tactics, in the evening sent a column by a circuit, which taking his enemy in the rear put them to a disastrous flight; 17,000 were left on the field and as many more taken prisoners. Damascus thus left defenceless, Ibrahim and Soleiman made their escape from thence, but not before they had plundered the treasury and put the two sons of Welid to death, also Yusuf, the late tyrant of Kufa. They had no sooner fled than the adherents of Welid rose upon the relatives of the fallen ruler with slaughter and riot, and having exhumed the body of Yezid III, impaled it at the Jabia gate of the city. Merwan, on coming up, had the bodies of Welid's sons honourably buried, as also that of Yusuf. And, there being now none with a better claim, he was saluted Caliph, and thereafter returned to his palace at Harran. Ibrahim, who survived only a year or two, was admitted to amnesty; and so also was Soleiman, who to outward appearance was reconciled, and in token thereof gave his sister in marriage to the son of Merwan.

Defeats Ibrahim's army.

Is saluted Caliph as Merwan II, 127 A.H. 745 A.D.

His success notwithstanding, embers of disaffection were ever bursting into flame around Merwan. The support accorded him by the Modhar (northern) clan, and the sanguinary defeat inflicted by them, rankled in the breast of the Yemen (or southern) tribes. Kharejite adventurers sprang up in every quarter of the empire; and the Hashimite (or Abbasside) conspiracy spread with alarming rapidity, especially in the East. Disaffection brooded over the Empire. Merwan, with all his strength and warlike prowess, was ever endeavouring to stem the rising wave. His reign was one continual struggle, which, spite of all his difficulties, would without doubt have put rebellion down, had the Syrian forces held a united and faithful front; but that, from the tribal jealousies prevailing, they failed to do, and the result was fatal to Omeyyad rule.

Merwan surrounded by difficulties.

Merwan had not returned to Harran three months, when Hims, incited by the Yemenite faction, broke out into rebellion. It was reduced, but not without great

Various insurrections.

A.H. 126-130.

Insurrections.

slaughter. The city walls were demolished and 500 bodies of the rebels hung around it. At the same time, the Yemen tribes who were settled in and about Damascus, attacked the city; but they were discomfited by a detachment from Hims, and their villages in the beautiful vale of the Barada burned to the ground. Shortly after, a serious insurrection breaking out in Palestine, threatened Tiberias; the Rebel leader, one of Merwan's own generals in the Caucasus, was taken prisoner with three sons. The arms and legs of all four were cut off, and their bodies impaled at the gates of Damascus. Tadmor also rose against the Caliph, but was reduced and its walls demolished. And now that Syria was quieted, Merwan retired to his palace at Rusâfa. His two sons were declared Heirs-apparent, and, to conciliate the other branches of the Omeyyad family, married to daughters of Hisham. But he had not rested long when troubles afresh broke out.

Rebellion of Ibn Muavia, descendant of Jafar, 126 A.H. 744 A.D.

It is a sign of the restlessness of Moslem feeling at this time, that besides the claims of the representatives of Abbas the uncle, and of Aly the cousin and son-in-law, of Mahomet, a pretender from another branch of which we hear nothing before, now appeared at Kufa, in the person of Ibn Muavia, great-grandson of Jafar, brother of Aly, who was killed in the battle of Muta.[1] This man was honoured on account of his birth by the governor Ibn Omar, who even provided for his support, but kept a watchful eye upon him. His pretensions to the throne were warmly espoused by the Citizens. When after the accession of Merwan, Ibn Muavia stepped forth to claim his pretended right, crowds followed after him, so that the plain from Kufa to Hira was white with them. But immediately a force was sent against him, his brave supporters, after the fashion of the fickle city, fell away. And so, after some desultory fighting, he was allowed, with his adherents still clinging to him, to depart across the Tigris to Medain. There he succeeded in establishing a footing. Many flocked to his standard, including crowds

Expelled from Kufa, 127 A.H. 745 A.D.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 381. Jafar was the son of Abu Talib; see table, *supra*, p. 395. He was killed two years before Mahomet's death.

A.H. 126–130.

Success in Persia, 128 A.H. 746 A.D.

Defeated by Ibn Hobeira, 129 A.H. 747 A.D.

Put to death by Abu Muslim.

of the servile class from Kufa. With their aid he gained possession of Holwan and the hill-country east of the Tigris. In the next two years, supported by the Kharejites, he played a marvellous *rôle* in Persia, establishing his court at Istakhr, and acknowledged in Ispahan, Rei, Cumis, and other chief cities in the East. In 129 A.H., however, the Kharejites having been subdued by Ibn Hobeira, his followers were dispersed by the Syrian columns, and he himself forced to fly to the far East.[1] By this time Abu Muslim (of whom we shall hear more shortly) had established himself in the Hashimite (Abbasside) interest at Merve; and Ibn Muavia, learning that he was fighting for the house of Hashim, repaired to the governor of Herat and urged his claims as a scion of that descent. "Give us thy "pedigree," said the Governor, "that we may know who "thou art." "The son of Muavia, who was the son of "Abdallah, who was the son of Jafar."[2] But *Muavia*, as the reader will understand, was a name of evil omen to a Hashimite; and so the answer ran,—"Abdallah we know, "and Jafar we know; but as for *Muavia*, it is a name we "know not of." "My grandfather," explained the fugitive, "was at the court of Muavia when my father was born, and "the Caliph bade him call the infant by his name, and for "that received the gift of 100,000 dirhems." "An evil "name, verily, for a small price," was the reply; "we "recognise thee not." On the matter being reported to him, Abu Muslim bade them release the rest of the party: but Ibn Muavia, as a descendant of Abu Talib, was too dangerous a competitor to be spared, and so by command of the Abbasside viceroy, the fugitive was smothered under a mattress, and buried at Herat, where, says the historian, his tomb has become a place of pilgrimage. Abu Muslim had cause to rue the cruel deed.

Rebellion of Soleiman, 127 A.H. 745 A.D.

No sooner had Ibn Muavia quitted Kufa, than a serious rebellion broke out in Irac under a Kharejite leader named Dhahhak. To suppress this, Merwan gathered a force at

---

[1] His following must still have been great, as 40,000 are said to have been taken prisoners, but released by Ibn Hobeira.

[2] See table, p. 395.

A.H. 126-130.

Kirkesia to be led by Yezid ibn Hobeira.[1] But as it was assembling, 10,000 of the number, Yemenites from Syria, conspired against the Caliph, and persuaded the ungrateful Soleiman, by the prospect of the throne, to put himself at their head. Crowds of disloyalists flocked to his banner at Kinnisrin, and Merwan had to recall Ibn Hobeira from pursuit of Dhahhak to oppose the army, now swelled to 70,000, led by his new and formidable rival. After a heavy battle, Soleiman was completely defeated, losing his sons and 30,000 men; for Merwan would allow no quarter nor prisoners to be taken. Soleiman fled to Hims; and on his followers being again beaten, escaped to Dhahhak. Merwan was still held back from attacking the Kharejites by the rebellion of Hims, which, having thrown off its allegiance, had to be besieged. Though surrounded by eighty catapults, which threw shot day and night over the walls, it held out for ten months, but at last capitulated.

Rebellion of Soleiman.

Defeated; joins Dhahhak.

Hims besieged.

Rebellion of Dhahhak, 127 A.H. 745 A.D.

Meanwhile Irac was in a state of dangerous rebellion. After the expulsion of Ibn Muavia, the never-ending feud of Yemen and Modhar broke out with redoubled violence at Kufa,—the latter clan siding naturally with Merwan's governor, the former with his ousted predecessor, the son of Omar, who took possession of Hira; and thus for four months a civil war was kept up between Kufa and its suburb. Dhahhak, who with a large body of Kharejites, Soffarides, and other Separatists, had taken advantage of the troubled times to ravage Mesopotamia, now hearing of this state of things, seized the opportunity for attacking Kufa; and, although both sides joined to resist him, they were beaten, and the invaders took possession of the City. Ibn Omar fled to Wasit, but after three months he gave in and joined Dhahhak, in whose ranks he found Soleiman also. Dhahhak had now been above a year and a half master of the greater part of Irac when, thus reinforced, he was invited by the men of Mosul to take possession of their city, which he did. Merwan, still at Hims, sent his son Abdallah with a column of 8000, to hold him in check; but he had no sooner, with this view, thrown himself into Nisibin, than Dhahhak besieged him there with an army of 100,000.

---

[1] Yezid was son of Omar ibn Hobeira, murdered by Khalid (p. 443); but like his father he is ordinarily called simply Ibn Hobeira.

A.H. 126–130.

Beaten by Merwan II, end of 128 A.H. 746 A.D.

Hims having surrendered, it was now high time for Merwan himself to take the field; and this he did with all the force at his disposal. The two armies met near Mardin. The battle raged all day and well on into the night, when search being made on the field, the body of Dhahhak, who with 6000 sworn followers dismounted to fight to the death, was found pierced through with twenty wounds. Next day, battle renewed, the leader of the Kharejites, by a wild onset on the Imperial centre, placed Merwan in such peril, that he fled for several miles; but returning, he found the wings holding firm, and the enemy completely routed.[1] Having sent the Rebel's head all round Mesopotamia, Merwan pursued the Kharejites, who still held together 40,000 strong, to Mosul, and after several months' fighting drove them across the Tigris and dispersed them in the East. Soleiman escaped, but only to meet his end at the hands of the coming dynasty.[2] Irac was still in the hands of the rebels; and it was not till the middle of 129 A.H., that Ibn Hobeira, after more fighting, expelled them from Kufa and Bussorah. Though order was thus at last restored to the nearer parts of the Empire, the Kharejites had entire possession of Azerbijan, from which they drove out the Imperial troops. Throughout Arabia also they more or less prevailed; Abu Hamza their leader was so powerful that at one time he had possession of both the Holy cities; and the Caliph was obliged to send a large force to restore order throughout Arabia.

Who retakes Mosul, 129 A.H. 747 A.D.

Various Kharejite risings.

---

[1] We are told that after this engagement, *battle in line* was given up, and fighting carried on by battalions (karâdis).

[2] We may here follow Soleiman to his end. He escaped with his family and retainers to Sind, and eventually presented himself, as an enemy of the Omeyyads, before the Hashimite Caliph, who at the first received him graciously. One of his courtiers seeing this recited verses warning the Caliph against appearances, and the danger of sparing any Omeyyad. Thereupon he retired, and shortly after gave orders for Soleiman, like the rest of his race, to be put to death.

A.H. 126–130.

Kharejites.

Though Abu Hamza appeared at the Pilgrimage with 700 followers against the Omeyyads, clad in black and with black banners the emblem of the Abbassides, yet as a Kharejite he was equally opposed to the Hashimite pretender; for neither the Omeyyad, nor as yet for the Abbasside race, did he profess any partiality or respect, but rather for the simple memory of Abu Bekr and Omar. It will thus appear that these Puritan covenanters, all over the Empire, if not in the ascendency, were yet powerful enough, even where baffled, to confuse and often paralyse the Government.

Africa.

Spain gradually slipping from Eastern control.

In the West, as elsewhere, the administration was weak and unsettled. The Governors throughout Africa had to keep up a continual contest against the Berbers and the Kharejites. In Spain, the Kharejite element was weak, and the Hashimite unknown: but in all other respects, Syria repeated itself in the Peninsula. The Arabs flocking thither in vast multitudes were taught to forget their Native land, or rather to reproduce it in the West. Spain became to them a second home. Its landscape, to the Bedouin imagination, conjured up the lands of Syria and of Palestine, and the Bedouins seemed to nestle again in the scenes of their childhood. "Thus (we "read) the Arabs spread themselves over the land; the "men of Damascus settled in Albera because of its like"ness to their native vale, and called it Damascus"; and so on with those who had come from Tadmore, Hims, Kinnisrin, and other cities of the East.[1] But with the similitude of the old country, arose also its wretched feuds. Yemen fought against Modhar, and Modhar against Yemen. The contest was maintained even more fiercely than against the infidel, till at last they agreed to appoint a neutral chief of the Coreish. But even this failed, and for some months, there being no Ameer, anarchy was rife. Then they settled to have an Ameer one year from the Modhar, and the next from the Yemen tribe. But at the end of the first term the Modharite ruler refused to resign. And so things went on in the distracted land, till, as we shall see, Spain slipped entirely from the grasp of the eastern Caliphate.

---

[1] Other places are mentioned, thus:—"The men of Hims settled in Ishbelia, and called it Hims; of Kinnisrin, in Jian, and called it Kinnisrin; of Jordan, in Berea, and called it Jordan; of Palestine, in Shadzuna, and called it Palestine; of Egypt, in Todmir, and, from its similitude, called it Egypt," and so on.

A.H. 126–130.

At various periods, the Greeks made inroads upon the border lands of Asia Minor and Syria, which Merwan, with trouble on his hands at home, had no means of opposing. He had also, for the same reason, to turn a deaf ear to Nasr's cry for help from Khorasan,—where events, as will be shown in the next chapter, were rapidly hastening the downfall of the Omeyyad dynasty.

Growing difficulties.

On the restoration of order in Mesopotamia and Irac, Merwan returned to Harran, his residence in the Desert, and there remained in dangerous and inopportune repose, till he was called away by the fatal campaign of the Zab.

Merwan retires to Harran, 130 A.H. 748 A.D.

CHAPTER LVIII

REMAINDER OF MERWAN'S REIGN. ABBASSIDE RISING IN THE EAST UNDER ABU MUSLIM AND CAHTABA. RECOGNITION OF ABBASSIDE CALIPH. BATTLE OF ZAB. DEFEAT AND DEATH OF MERWAN

130–132 A.H. 748–750 A.D.

Growth of Abbasside influence in the East.

THE progress of recent events in the East has been kept for separate treatment. The same causes were there at work as elsewhere,—Kharejite risings and Tribal jealousies. But there were special elements of weakness besides. The authority of the Court was felt less in Khorasan than elsewhere, and in fact was fast disappearing altogether. Hashimite treason, long secretly hatching its disloyal brood, was now coming to an open head: and powerful clubs in support of the Abbasside rising were appearing fearlessly everywhere. The body politic was falling to pieces; and the specious claim of the Prophet's house as against the ungodly Omeyyads, paved an easy way for the great change now looming in the future.

Critical position of Omeyyads in Khorasan, 126–8 A.H. 743–5 A.D.

The position of Nasr, Viceroy in Khorasan, had become in the last degree critical. Kirmany, as already stated, had drawn to his standard the Yemenite faction,—that, namely, hostile to Nasr. Put in prison as a dangerous agitator, he effected his escape, and kept up an armed opposition. To increase the disorder, Harith, for whom Nasr had obtained amnesty from the Court, turned against him; and, confederate as he had been of the pagan Turk, assumed now a high religious profession, and raising the black flag, demanded a reform of government in accordance with "the Book of the Lord." After many fruitless

A.H. 130–132.

Events in Khorasan.

negotiations, Nasr offered to help him if he would again depart and fight beyond the Oxus, but he preferred to remain and do battle, now on the side of Kirmany, and now against him. In one of these engagements he was killed: but Kirmany maintained his ground against Nasr, and even seizing Merve, plundered the treasury. It was still the endless quarrel of Modhar and Yemen pitted one against the other, with no decisive result other than that Khorasan was left with hardly even the form of government.

Abu Muslim agent of the Abbassides.

Just then, towards the end of 129 A.H., the great black standard of the Abbassides was unfurled in Khorasan, by Abu Muslim. The origin of this famous man who, though still young, was already the hero of the new Dynasty, is obscure. Amidst much that is discordant, we may assume that he was born a slave. In the year 125 A.H. (743 A.D.) Mohammed, head of the Abbasside house, with a party of his adherents, visited Mecca; and anticipating decease (he died the same year) bade his followers in that event to take his son Ibrahim as successor. At the same time he purchased Abu Muslim, then not twenty years of age, as a likely agent for the service of the House. Abu Muslim fulfilling thus the office of confidential agent, was kept going to and fro between Khorasan and Homeima (the village in south Palestine where the Family lived), to promote the cause, and to report its progress. At last, in 129 A.H., he gave so promising an account of the zeal of his adherents, of the impotence of Omeyyad rule in Khorasan, and of the distractions there, that he received from Ibrahim command to delay no longer, but raise at once the banner of the new Dynasty. In the month of Ramzan accordingly, Abu Muslim proceeding to the far East, sent forth his emissaries in all directions with instructions when and how the rising was to take place. Before the month was over, contingents had begun to pour in from every quarter. In one night there arrived no fewer than sixty from as many different places. The Omeyyad garrisons were expelled from Herat and other cities in the far East. Elsewhere, Abu Muslim's agents sought to win over the

Raises black standard in the East, ix. 129 A.H. May 747 A.D.

A.H. 130-132.

Takes Merve.

Modhar, by abuse of the Yemen, tribes; and the Yemen by abuse of the Modhar. Even Nasr and Kirmany were tampered with; and Nasr, fearing that Kirmany might go over, had him made away with. Then Abu Muslim, joined by the sons of that chief,[1] drove Nasr out of Merve, and took possession of the Citadel. But this success at last united the Syrians of either party against the Hashimite rebellion; and if the Caliph had only been able to strengthen Nasr's hands, the event must have been very different. The unfortunate Viceroy appealed to his Caliph in bitter terms that he was left without support; and quoting verses to the effect that beneath was a volcano ready at any moment to burst forth, he added the fateful words—*Is the house of Omeyya awake, or is it slumbering still?* On receiving this despairing cry, Merwan ordered Ibn Hobeira to hasten reinforcements to the East; but with disaffection around him in the West, it was little that the General could do for Nasr. About the same time, the Caliph intercepted a letter from his Abbasside rival, Ibrahim son of Mohammed, to Abu Muslim, upbraiding him for not making more rapid progress in Khorasan, and warning him against the hostility of the Arabs and Syrians towards the rising cause. Startled and alarmed at his machinations, Merwan bade the governor of Belcaa arrest Ibrahim. He was accordingly seized in his house at Homeima, and sent to Harran, where shortly after he died, but whether by a violent death, or a natural one, is uncertain.[2] On the arrest of Ibrahim, his brothers Abul Abbas and Abu Jafar, with the rest of the family, fled to Kufa, where they remained for the present in concealment.

Nasr appeals for help.

Arrest and death of Ibrahim.

Abu Muslim's able administration.

Meanwhile Abu Muslim was making steady progress in the East. His open unassuming habits, with neither bodyguard nor courtly ceremony, attached men to him.

---

[1] The two sons of Kirmany were, however, found by Abu Muslim, probably from their Syrian associations, to be inconvenient allies; and were, with their attendants, treacherously put to death. Abu Muslim made no scruple of assassinating by any underhand means those whom he found in his way.

[2] Some say he died of the plague; others that he was poisoned in a draught of milk; others that Merwan caused his prison house to fall upon him. The presumption is against a violent death. Abul Abbas succeeded him.

He committed the ordinary administration to a Council of twelve, chosen from the earliest adherents of the new cause. He was also wise enough to make his watch-word simply the *House of Hashim*, without declaring by name the master or even the family for whom he fought. There were still many who held by the line of Abu Talib, and wished to see one of his descendants rather than an Abbasside, succeed; the cry, therefore, of Abu Muslim embraced all these branches, including that of Aly. At one time Abu Muslim opened friendly communications with Nasr, who, seeing no hope of help from Syria, had thoughts to throw in his lot with him; but fearing treachery, he at last resolved on flight, and so, with the troops still faithful to the Omeyyad cause, hastened south to Serakhs, and thence to Nisabur. There pursued by Cahtaba, Abu Muslim's famous general, he suffered a defeat in which he lost his son. Thence he fled to Jorjan, where was a strong force of friendly Syrians. But fortune had deserted the Caliph's cause, and Cahtaba again achieved a signal victory, slaying thousands of his enemy.[1] Nasr, again appealing bitterly but in vain for help, continued his flight westward to Rei. There he fell sick, and was carried on towards Hamadan, but died upon the way. He was eighty-five years old, and his long and distinguished services as viceroy of Khorasan deserved a better fate.

Abu Muslim in the East.

Nasr flees south, is defeated by Cahtaba, end of 130 A.H.

Death of Nasr, iii. 131 A.H. Nov. 748 A.D.

Cahtaba now advanced rapidly westward. Entering Rei, he restored order there, while his son, Ibn Cahtaba, with other generals, reduced the country all around,—the followers of the Omeyyads, as well as the Kharejites whose rebellion had recently been quelled, flying terrified before them. Ibn Cahtaba then laid siege to Nehavend. The Caliph's army from Kerman (now released by Ibn Muavia's defeat and flight) advancing, 100,000 strong, to its relief, was intercepted by Cahtaba, who with 20,000 men, after a fierce battle, entirely routed his enemy, and took his camp itself a little city filled with all the luxuries of the East. After a three months' siege, Nehavend fell, and then Cahtaba, having fetched a northern circuit across the

Cahtaba advances on Kufa, 131 A.H. 749 A.D.

---

[1] The numbers slain are variously put at from 10,000 to 30,000.

A.H. 130-132.

Defeats Ibn Hobeira, who falls back on Wasit, 8th i. 132 A.H.

Euphrates, to avoid Ibn Hobeira the Syrian general at Jalola, made direct for Kufa where, with expectations raised by the tidings of recent success, the Hashimite citizens were looking impatiently for his appearance. It was the beginning of the year 132 A.H. when Cahtaba crossed the Euphrates, some thirty or forty miles above Kufa; but Ibn Hobeira was before him, and the two armies met somewhere in the vicinity of Kerbala. In this encounter the Syrians were worsted, but the Hashimites too suffered, for Cahtaba fell upon the field. His son, Ibn Cahtaba, then took command, and, following up his father's success, forced Ibn Hobeira, abandoning his camp and all its stores, to retire on Wasit. Kufa thus uncovered, the Hashimite force advanced, and after slight opposition,—for the Syrian troops deserted hastily the Omeyyad leader,—took possession of the City; and shortly after Abul Abbas with his family and relatives emerged from their hiding there. In anticipation of the new order of things, (reserved for another chapter), Abu Salma, who had been one of the busy agents of the Hashimites in Khorasan, was recognised provisionally as "Wazeer of the house of Mahomet," and Mohammed, son of Khalid (former governor of Kufa,) as "Ameer."

Takes Kufa; Abul Abbas emerges from hiding, 10th i. 132 A.H. 29th Aug. 749 A.D.

Abu Aun defeats Merwan's son on Little Zab, 20 xii. 131 A.H. Aug. 749 A.D.

Meanwhile, stirring events were passing in Upper Mesopotamia. Cahtaba, in his victorious progress westward, had detached an able general, Abu Aun, from Nehavend to press forwards to Mesopotamia. Reaching Shahrzor, east of the Little Zab, towards the end of 131 A.H., he there defeated with great slaughter the troops of Abdallah, Merwan's son, and occupied the region east of Mosul. The Caliph himself, since his campaign against the Kharejites, had remained inactive at Harran. He was now roused, by seeing the enemy at his very door, to take the field in person,—which earlier done, the issue might have been very different; but now with rebellion, defeat, and disaffection around, the ground was sinking under foot. Crossing the Tigris, he advanced upon the Greater Zab with an army of 120,000, sufficiently strong in numbers to meet his enemy, but made up in great

Merwan II at last takes the field.

Battle of the Zab, 11th vi. 132 A.H. 25th Jan. 750 A.D.

measure of lukewarm Yemen tribes and Kharejites. Meanwhile, Ibn Hobeira having retired on Wasit, Abul Abbas the rival Caliph, was able from Kufa heavily to reinforce Abu Aun. To give the army also an Imperial bearing, he sent his uncle Abdallah as commander-in-chief: and to him accordingly Abu Aun resigned the State-pavilion, mark of supreme command. Abdallah found Merwan encamped with his great host on the right bank of the Zab, and Abu Aun with only 20,000 on the left. A party of the latter crossed, but after a skirmish retired. Next day, Merwan, against advice, threw a bridge across the river, and advanced to fight. His son at the first beat back a column of the enemy; and Abu Aun, lest the report should dishearten the army, resolved at once to bring on a general action. Historians tell us that Merwan did nothing that day to prosper; but the real truth is that the Syrians had lost both loyalty and heart. Abu Aun made his men dismount on the first attack, and plant their lances in the ground; while Abdallah incited them, as the heroes of Khorasan, to revenge the death of his nephew Ibrahim; he shouted, *Ya Mohammed! Ya Mansur!* and the battle-cry was taken up by all around. Merwan, on his side, called aloud to the Arab tribes, one after another by name, to advance, but none responded to the call. Then in an evil moment, expecting thereby to raise their zeal, he made known that he had treasure in the camp and would reward the brave; on which, some of the soldiers hastened thither, hoping at once to seize the prize. To prevent this, Merwan detached his son; and as he turned aside with guard and standard to protect the camp, the army took it for flight; and with the cry *Defeat! Defeat!* broke and gave way. Merwan, to stay the flight, cut the bridge adrift; and more were drowned in the Zab than perished by the sword.[1]

Defeat and flight of Merwan II.

---

[1] A grandson of Abd al Melik being seen struggling in the waves, Abdallah, the new Caliph's brother, is said to have cried, "Let him alone," quoting from the Coran the passage on the destruction of the Egyptians: "Verily, when We divided the sea and saved you alive, but drowned the host of Pharaoh therein, while ye looked on." *Sura* ii. 47.

A.H. 130-132.

Defeat of Merwan.

This battle, which foretold the fate of the Omeyyad Caliphate, took place in the year 132 A.H., or 750 A.D. Abdallah remained for a week on the field, and reported his victory to Abul Abbas, who, overjoyed at the tidings, ordered 500 golden pieces, and promise of increased pay, to be given to every combatant.

His flight.

Merwan fled. At Mosul, his followers cried out, "It is "the Caliph, let him cross." "A lie," they answered from the other bank, "the Caliph doth not fly"; and so they showered abuse upon the fallen Monarch, and glorified the triumphant "House of the Prophet." Merwan then made the best of his way to Harran, where he spent some weeks in the vain endeavour to raise another army. But Abdallah was on his track, and so he hurried on to Hims, and thence, receiving no support, to Damascus. But neither could he safely make any stay there, and so desiring the Governor, his son-in-law, to hold on, and raise another army, he fled to Palestine, where he found refuge with an Arab chief.

Damascus taken by Abdallah, brother of Abul Abbas.

Meanwhile, under orders from Kufa, Abdallah had advanced from the Zab to Mosul, where they streamed forth to meet him with open arms, clad in the black colours of the new dynasty. At Harran, the governor, Merwan's nephew, came out in similar attire to make his submission; and there Abdallah avenged the death of Ibrahim, his nephew, by the unmeaning demonstration of demolishing the house which had formed his prison.[1] Passing onward to Syria, he received the adhesion of all the chief places by the way. At Damascus reinforcements joined him from Kufa under his brother Salih, raising the force to 80,000. The City closed its gates against him, but after a short resistance was stormed, and the governor slain. Thereupon the black standard of the Abbassides was unfurled in triumph on the Citadel, the 5th Ramzan, 132 A.H., eight months from the Hashimite entry into Kufa, and three from the battle of the Zab. After a short stay, Abdallah passed on to Palestine in

18th April 750 A.D.

---

[1] This action is in favour of the impression that Ibrahim did not die a violent death.

A.H. 130–132.

Merwan II pursued in Egypt, xi. 132 A.H. June 750 A.D.

pursuit of Merwan, but found that he had fled to Egypt. Then, under orders from the new Caliph, he despatched his brother Salih and Abu Aun with a force to follow up the fugitive. At Said he found that, to stay pursuit, Merwan's followers had burned all supplies of grass and fodder in the neighbourhood. From Fostat, Salih detached Abu Aun with a column, which took prisoners a troop of cavalry still attached to the fallen Caliph. Some they put to death; the rest were faithless enough to purchase their lives by disclosing their Master's hiding-place. He had taken refuge in a church at Busîr, where surprised by a small party he was overpowered and slain, just as the year expired.

Slain, 26 xii. 132 A.H. 5th Aug. 750 A.D.

Head sent to Abul Abbas.

The head was sent to Salih, who had the tongue cut out and thrown contemptuously to a cat. Thus disfigured it was despatched to Kufa. On seeing it, Abul Abbas bowed low in adoration. Then raising his head towards heaven, he praised the Lord who had given him victory and revenge over an ungodly race. He recited also a verse indicative of the fire that still burned within his heart:—"Had they quaffed my blood, it had not quenched "their thirst; so neither is my wrath slaked by theirs." True to the sentiment, he named himself (as we shall see) *Saffâh*, the Blood-thirsty, and by that title he has ever since been known.

His sons and daughters.

Two of Merwan's sons fled to Abyssinia, where, attacked by the natives, one was killed; the other escaped, and lived long concealed in Palestine, from whence he was sent many years after to the Court of Mehdy. The ladies of Merwan's family had been placed for safety in a church, from which they were dragged to the presence of Salih.[1] Before him the elder daughter pleaded for mercy. She was answered with reproaches for the cruel treatment by her people of the house of Hashim:—"How," said the Caliph's uncle, "can I spare any of this wicked race?" Again she pleaded for grace and mercy:—"Nay," he eplied, "but if thou wilt, thou mayest marry my son and

---

[1] The servant, in whose charge they were, is said to have had instructions o put them to death if Merwan should have lost his life.

A.H. 130–132.

"save thyself." "What heart have I now for that?" she answered; "but send us back to Harran again." And when they returned there, and saw the old home and palace of Merwan, they lifted up their voices and wept.

His character.

Merwan was over threescore years at his death, and had reigned for nearly six. His mother was a Kurdish slave-girl, and from her he inherited a handsome countenance, with blue eyes and a ruddy complexion. He was called the *Ass of Mesopotamia*, not in derision, but in virtue of his great power of physical endurance. He was one of the bravest and best of his house, and deserved a better fate.[1]

End of Omeyyad dynasty.

So perished the Omeyyad dynasty, and on its ruins rose the house of Hashim.

---

[1] He was also called Al Jadi, from professing the heretical views of Jad, a theologian who held the doctrine of Free-will, and denied that the Coran was eternal and uncreate. But this may have been one of the calumnies heaped by the Abbasside courtiers on the house of Omeyya. His mother was the Omm Walad of Ibrahim al Ashtar, taken over by his father the day her master was slain.

CHAPTER LIX

THE ABBASSIDE DYNASTY

132–656 A.H. 750–1258 A.D.

IN passing from the Omeyyad to the Abbasside Caliphate, we reach in many respects a fresh departure which justifies a pause and some words in explanation of the change.

New features in the Abbasside Caliphate.

The Caliphate no longer co-ordinate with Islam.

The first new feature is, that while the Omeyyad Caliphate, from first to last, was co-ordinate with the limits of Islam, this is no longer true of the Abbasside. The authority of the new dynasty was never acknowledged in Spain; and throughout Africa, excepting Egypt, it was but intermittent and for the most part nominal; while in the East, as time rolled on, independent dynasties arose. Islam was thus broken up into many fragments, not necessarily in any way dependent on the Caliphate, each with its own separate history. But with all this, the Abbasside remained the only dynasty that truly represented the proper Caliphate. Monarchs reigning in Cordova could only be recognised as "Caliphs" in so far as every supreme ruler of Islam holds in his hand the spiritual as well as the secular authority, and may thus in some sense claim to be the Caliph or *Successor* of the Prophet. The Abbassides alone had any colour of pretension to the name by virtue of legitimate succession.[1]

Remainder of this work.

It being, then, my sole object to trace the Caliphate, properly so called, to its close, the rest of this work will

---

[1] The Spanish dynasty, though sprung from the line of Omeyyad Caliphs, did not at first venture to assume the title. Abd al Rahman (Abderame, 300–349 A.H.) was the first who did so.

A.H. 132–656.

be restricted to a narrative of the dynasty of the Abbassides as they rose first to the crest of glory, then sank gradually under the sway of Sultans and Grand Viziers, and at last ended a mere phantom, vanishing into the shadowy pageantry of attendants on the Mameluke kings of Egypt. Events outside the Caliphate will only so far be noticed as they bear upon the individual history of the Dynasty. Thus alone will it be possible to keep the remainder of this book within reasonable dimensions.

Restricted to Abbasside Caliphate.

Arab nation loses martial vigour.

Another marked feature in the era on which we enter is the change which now comes over the Arab people, and the attitude of the new Dynasty towards them. To their hardy life and martial fire, were mainly due the first spread of Islam and material prosperity of the Caliphate. But the race had by this time lost much of its early hardihood and vigour. Enriched with the spoil of conquered peoples, the temptations to pride and luxury had gradually sapped their warlike virtue, and so they either settled down with well-filled Harems, living sumptuously at their ease; or, if they still preferred the field, yielded there to petulance, rivalries, and insubordination, preferring, too often, the interests of person, family, and tribe, to the interests of Islam. The fervour of religious enthusiasm had in great measure passed away, and self-aggrandisement had taken the place of passion for National glory and extension of the Faith. The Saracen was no longer the Conqueror of the world.

Cast off by Abbassides,

Added to this, the Abbassides on their accession lost all confidence in their own Arab race; indeed, they had already done so for several years before. They were brought to the Throne, and supported there, not by them but by levies from Persia and Khorasan; while of the Omeyyads, the Syrians remained the last support, and the Arab tribes, whether Modhar or Yemen, were ranged upon their side. Ibrahim felt this so strongly, that in the letter intercepted by Merwan, in which he chided Abu Muslim for his delay in crushing Nasr and Kirmany,[1] he added angrily,—"See that there be not one left in

---

[1] See above, p. 428.

"Khorasan whose tongue is the tongue of the Arabian, "but he be slain!" It was among the Arabs of Syria and Mesopotamia that dangerous revolt repeatedly took place against the new Dynasty, and so they continued to be looked askance upon. Before long the Caliphs drew their bodyguard entirely from the Turks about the Oxus; and that barbarous race, scenting from afar the delights of the South, were not slow to follow in their wake. Before long they began to overshadow the noble Arab chieftains; and so we soon find the Imperial forces officered almost entirely by Turcomans, freedmen or slaves, of strange descent and uncouth name. In the end the Caliphs became the helpless tools of their rude protectors: and the Arabs, where not already denationalised by city life, retired to roam at will in their desert wilds.

Who throw themselves into hands of Turks and Persians.

With the rise of Persian influence, however, the roughness of Arab life was softened; and there opened an era of culture, toleration, and scientific research. The practice of oral tradition was also giving place to recorded statement and historical narrative,—a change hastened by the scholarly tendencies introduced from the East.

Persian influences.

To the same source may be attributed the ever-increasing laxity at Court of manners and morality; and also those transcendental views that now sprang up, of the divine Imâmat or spiritual leadership of some member of the house of Aly; as well as the rapid growth of free thought.

These things will be developed as we go on. But I have thought it well to draw attention at this point to the important changes wrought by the closer connection of the Caliphate with Persia and Khorasan, caused by the accession of the Abbassides.

CHAPTER LX

ABUL ABBAS, SAFFÂH

132–136 A.H. 749–754 A.D.

A BRIEF review may here be necessary, to recall the circumstances attending the establishment of the new Caliphate at Kufa.

Abul Abbas, *Saffâh*, 132 A.H. 749 A.D.

In a previous chapter we have seen that while Merwan still tarried at Harran, Ibn Hobeira, the Omeyyad general, was defeated in the vicinity of Kufa by the army of Cahtaba, and obliged to fall back on Wasit. Abu Salma, heretofore the busy leader and agent of the Hashimite cause in Khorasan, now came and encamped at Kufa in the beginning of the year 132 A.H., where meeting with little opposition, he took possession of the city, and for a time carried on the government under the simple title of "Wazeer of the house of Mahomet." On the arrest of Ibrahim, two or three years before, his two Brothers with all the relatives of the house of Hashim, had fled from Homeima to Kufa, where they remained ever since in concealment. They were now taken charge of by Abu Salma, but for several weeks still kept by him in the strictest privacy. When urged to declare at once the advent of the new Dynasty, he said that it would be premature and dangerous so long as Ibn Hobeira maintained his stand at Wasit. Some suspected him of favouring the other branch of Hashimite stock, that, namely, descended from Aly, but of these none had now the ambition or the courage to come forward. However that may be, the Abbasside party were impatient at the delay, and learning that Ibrahim, late head of the House, had

Abbasside family brought into Kufa, ii. 132 A.H. Oct. 749 A.D.

A.H. 132–136.

declared his younger brother Abul Abbas (son of a noble mother, his brother Abu Jafar being son of a slave-girl) his successor, they brought him out openly; and finding the people with them, proceeded on a public demonstration. It was about three months after the occupation of Kufa by the Hashimite troops that, apparently with the consent of Abu Salma, they mounted Abul Abbas upon a piebald horse, entered the Palace, and thence proceeded to the Great mosque. There the new Caliph ascended the pulpit and made his first address. He magnified the virtues and claims of the descendants of the Prophet, denounced the usurpation and crimes of the Omeyyads and their Syrian followers, praised the Kufans for their fidelity to his family, which he promised to reward by an increase of their stipends; and ended by declaring it his mission to root out all opposition, for, said he, "I am the Great revenger, and my name *Saffâh*, the Shedder of Blood."[1] His uncle Daud followed with still fiercer words. He styled Merwan "the enemy of the Lord and Caliph of the Devil," and affirmed that the only real successors of the Prophet were two;—Aly his Son-in-law, who had stood in that very pulpit, and now another standing in it, even Abul Abbas, the true Commander of the Faithful. "Delay not then," he said, "to take the oath of fealty. The dominion is ours, and with us it will remain, till the day when we shall render it up to Jesus Son of Mary." Having thus delivered themselves, they both descended from the pulpit, and entered the Castle, whither the people flocked till it was dark, doing homage to the new Caliph. Abul Abbas then returned to the encampment of Abu Salma, where for some months he occupied with him the same abode.[2]

Abul Abbas done homage to, 12 iii. 132 A.H. 20th Oct. 749 A.D.

---

[1] His usual name, Saffâh, was given on account of his many bloody executions, which of course were yet in the future. It is not unlikely that the name may have been imported into his first harangue by anticipation; but I give the speech as I find it. Abul Abbas was suffering from an attack of fever, which made him cut short his address.

[2] The "same apartment," we are told, separated by a simple curtain between the two. This does not look as if suspicion existed, at anyrate at this time, against Abu Salma, of Alyite tendencies or other disloyalty.

A.H. 132–136.

Caliph retires to Hâshimiya.

By and by Abul Abbas became alienated from Abu Salma, whether from any well-grounded suspicion of unfriendly feeling, Alyite, or otherwise, cannot be said. But, whatever the cause, quitting now his house at Kufa, the new Caliph repaired to Anbar, in the neighbourhood of which he laid the foundation of a courtly residence, and called it after his family *Hâshimiya.* From thence he despatched his Uncles and other relatives, among whom were several of fair ability, with commands in various directions to replace the Officers of the fallen Dynasty. Acting under his direction, these soon earned for Abul Abbas a solid claim to the sanguinary title he aspired after.

Omeyyad house pursued to death.

His earliest care was to sweep from the face of the earth the entire Omeyyad race. Such wholesale butcheries cast into the shade anything the previous Dynasty had ever been accused of. The cruellest of them was that perpetrated by the Caliph's uncle in Palestine. An amnesty was offered to the numerous branches of the Family congregated there; and to confirm it they were invited, some ninety in number, to a feast. Suddenly a bard arose reciting in verse the evil deeds of the Omeyyads, and on signal given, the attendants fell on the unsuspecting guests, and put them all to death. A carpet was drawn across the ghastly spectacle, and the Tyrant resumed his feast over the still quivering limbs of the dying. All in whose veins ran the blood of Omeyyad princes were relentlessly pursued, and only such as were of tender years,[1] or successfully effected flight, escaped. At Bussorah, the like scene was soon after enacted; the miserable victims were slain, and their remains cast into the streets to be devoured of dogs. Those that escaped wandered about in terror, seeking vainly in disguise some place of secrecy. One such, a descendant of Abu Sofian, finding his life a burden, cast himself at the feet of an uncle of the Caliph, who, touched with pity, obtained a rescript not only sparing him, but granting a general amnesty to such as still survived. Nevertheless in the following year, we

Wholesale butchery in Palestine, 133 A.H. 751 A.D.

---

[1] The phrase used by the historian is "sucklings."

A.H. 132–136.

find another less merciful uncle of Saffâh, initiating a fresh slaughter of those who had taken shelter in the Holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Desecration of dead.

Nor did it suffice that they should vent their rage on the living, the fear of whose machinations might possibly be pleaded in feeble excuse. The tombs of the Caliphs were unearthed. Of the great Muavia there was nothing that remained but dust; and of the other Caliphs little more, excepting only Hisham, whose frame was found in singular preservation. This they scourged with whips, hung up for a while, and then burned, scattering the ashes to the winds. Such outrage raised indignation throughout Syria and Mesopotamia. Omeyyad households also were treated with indignity by the creatures of the new Dynasty. One of its minions, caught in the act of carrying off as slaves the Harem of the distinguished warrior Maslama, was slain by the governor of Kinnisrin, which forthwith rose in rebellion. All Syria, with Damascus at its head, followed suit. The Caliph's uncle Abdallah, at that moment quelling a rising in the Hauran, came to terms with the insurgents, and hastened to the north, where he was met by a defiant force of 40,000 men. After much fighting and various fortune, he defeated his enemy and restored order. A still more dangerous revolt threatened Hashimite rule in Mesopotamia, where an army of 60,000 Syrians in the field laid siege to Harran. To meet the emergency, Abul Abbas detached a column, under command of his brother Abu Jafar, from the army then besieging Ibn Hobeira in Wasit. This force advancing to the northern coasts of the Euphrates, dispersed the insurgents, but with some difficulty, for Someisat was not recovered till after a siege of seven months. Bussorah also resisted all attempts of the Hashimite general, supported by a column from Khorasan. That unfortunate City was also distracted within, apart altogether from the Abbasside attack; for the Modharite party, having got the ascendency after severe fighting, overthrew the opposite faction; and the City,—suffering thus whichever party conquered,—was for three days given up to pillage

Rebellion in Syria and Mesopotamia.

A.H. 132–136.

and outrage. The Omeyyad leaders, however, kept possession of it until Wasit fell.

Ibn Hobeira capitulates at Wasit.

These risings, if guided by an able leader with united interest and common design, might have changed the order of events, and raised the fallen Dynasty, which still had Syria for its support. It failed mainly from the fatal step of Ibn Hobeira, who, as we have seen, instead of hastening north for his support at the call of Merwan, fell back on Wasit, and there shut himself up with the flower of the Omeyyad troops. He was afraid (we are told) of Merwan, because he had not obeyed the order to detach troops for the support of Nasr in Khorasan; but whatever the cause, the delay proved fatal to his Master; for defeat in Syria was beyond comparison more to be dreaded than the loss of Wasit, important as it was. The siege of that cantonment was pressed vigorously by Ibn Cahtaba. The powerful garrison made no way against him, partly owing to the depressing influences of a failing Dynasty, and partly to the tribal jealousies which still paralysed the Syrian soldiery. Thus things went on for eleven months, during which the Omeyyad cause was being lost in Syria. At last, the new Caliph, recalling his brother Abu Jafar from the north, sent him to take the command at Wasit; and tidings of Merwan's death having meanwhile reached Ibn Hobeira, he thereupon offered to capitulate.[1] A full amnesty concluded by Abu Jafar, was ratified by the Caliph under solemn oath; and Abu Jafar, who received Ibn Hobeira graciously, was intent upon respecting it.

Treacherously put to death with followers.

But the Caliph, having consulted Abu Muslim then at Merve, and received his counsel to get Ibn Hobeira "as a stumbling-stone out of his way," persistently urged his death. Finally Abul Abbas sent two creatures of his own to do the deed, if Abu Jafar should still decline. Abu Jafar gave way; and summoning two-and-twenty of the leading Modhar chiefs to an interview, had them bound two and two, by a party concealed in an adjoining apartment, and, spite of their appeal to the Caliph's solemn oath, beheaded. Ibn Hobeira was at the same time slain, along with his son, by two emissaries of the Caliph, who repaired to his house under pretence of taking over treasure. The historian adds pathos to the cruel tale of perfidy; for he tells us that Ibn Hobeira, suspecting no treachery, had at the moment, on his knee a little son, whom they snatched from his embrace as he fell on his knees imploring mercy.[1]

---

[1] When he heard of Merwan's defeat and death, he is said to have written to Mohammed ibn Abdallah, a grandson of Hasan son of Aly, offering to support his claim to the throne, but waiting long for a reply, and the Caliph's emissaries beginning to tamper with the Yemenite party in his army, he capitulated; of this Ibn Abdallah we shall hear more in the next reign.

Ibn Hobeira slain.

Notwithstanding that the Hashimite banner everywhere prevailed, outrage still survived in many parts of the Empire. A terrible calamity overtook Mosul. The people refusing obedience to the new Governor as a low-born stranger, expelled him from their city. On this, the Caliph sent his brother Yahya, who proved himself worthy of his relationship to the "Shedder of blood." The townsmen were persuaded to gather in the court of the Mosque, under promise of full security, but the gates were no sooner closed upon them, than they were massacred to a man.[2] The city, deprived thus of its protectors, was given up for three days to sack and outrage. Besides the regular soldiery, there were with the troops 4000 negroes who shamelessly violated the women, till one of these, bolder than the rest, appealed to Yahya, the reins of whose horse she seized, and asked whether followers of the Prophet were now abandoned to the embrace of slaves. To appease the outcry, the entire body of the negroes was put to the sword. The Caliph is said to have removed his brother for cruelty thus even beyond his own, but nevertheless put him over another Province.

Bloodshed in Mosul.

---

[1] The Caliph's oath of amnesty was couched in the most stringent and solemn terms, and condign punishment from "the Searcher of hearts" was invoked on him who might violate its conditions. The historian adds (but hardly by way of justification) that Ibn Hobeira once addressed Abu Jafar as "O man" or by some such term; but immediately apologised for it as a slip of the tongue.

[2] The numbers are given at 10,000, but probably with the usual exaggeration of the slaughter made in the reign of Saffah.

A.H. 132–136.

Fighting elsewhere.

Elsewhere troubles prevailed to the end of the reign. The Viceroy of Sind and India refused to recognise Hashimite rule; after heavy fighting, he was beaten, and died of thirst in his flight through the desert. Bussorah being at last reduced by a force of veterans from Khorasan, the adherents of the old Dynasty fled to Oman, where they were joined by a vast host of Kharejites. They were in the end defeated by the Imperial troops, and incredible numbers slain or burned to death. In Khorasan there were similar outbreaks with even greater slaughter. The rebels of Bokhara, Soghd, and Ferghana, were aided by "the king of China," but put to flight by Ziad, governor of Samarcand, with terrible carnage.[1]

Abu Salma treacherously put to death.

We have seen that the Caliph on his accession, after living for some time in closest intimacy with Abu Salma, one of the leading supporters of the Hashimite cause in Khorasan and their "Vizier" at Kufa, became alienated from him, and so departed from his residence to Anbar. It is said that Abu Salma had a favour for the house of Aly, which stirred the Caliph's jealousy. Whether this be so or no, Abul Abbas cherished enmity against him in his heart, and wrote to Abu Muslim at Merve for his advice, which was that he should be put to death. The Caliph was dissuaded from ordering the execution, by an uncle who dwelt on the danger of revenge by Abu Salma's influential followers from Khorasan, and suggested that Abu Muslim should be asked to send an assassin for the purpose. This was done. Abul Abbas then ordered a crier to go forth and proclaim Abu Salma as "the man whom the Caliph delighteth to honour." So he was called and arrayed in a robe of honour, and entertained by the Caliph till night was far advanced. As he wended his way home alone, he was waylaid and assassinated. Report was diligently spread that the Kharejites had done the deed; but all well knew where the motive lay.[1] A.H. 132–136.

---

[1] 50,000 slain beyond the Oxus, and 20,000 taken prisoners. In Oman, 900 Kharejites were killed in battle, and 90 burned alive. Afterwards the troops attacked the town, which was built of wood, and pouring naphtha on the houses, set them thus ablaze; then rushing sword in hand on the terrified inhabitants, they slew 10,000,—"all counted, and the heads sent to Bussorah." One may hope that these butcheries are vastly exaggerated; but they point to the lamentable disregard for human life that now prevailed.

Abu Muslim in Khorasan.

Shortly after, Abu Jafar was deputed to Merve, with the view of feeling the pulse and attitude of Abu Muslim himself; and there conceived towards him a bitter animosity. As Viceroy of Khorasan, Abu Muslim exercised an unlimited, and, as Abu Jafar thought, a dangerous supremacy. Thus for an imprudent word, and on slight and arbitrary suspicion, he put to death Ibn Kethir, one of the earliest and most valuable advocates of the Hashimite mission in Khorasan.[2] This was done openly before Abu Jafar, who as we shall see never forgot the crime, and on his return to Irac told his Brother that he was no longer Caliph unless he got rid of this wilful autocrat. The Caliph took it to heart, but bade his brother for the present keep the matter secret. A year or two later, Ziad the governor of Samarcand, which had recently been strongly fortified, set up for himself, and Abu Muslim went to fight against him. On the way he discovered that an emissary of the Caliph (who is accused of having himself instigated the rebellion in order to weaken the too powerful Viceroy) was in his camp in league with Ziad, and that he had instructions to compass his death. The plot thus coming to light miscarried. Ziad was deposed and put to death by his own subjects, and the would-be assassin beheaded.

Attempt to assassinate him, 135 A.H.

Abu Muslim's pilgrimage with Abu Jafar, 136 A.H.

In the following year, Abu Muslim, undeterred by the machinations at the Court, asked permission to visit the Caliph at Anbar, and thence proceed on pilgrimage to Mecca. Leave was granted, but his following limited to

---

[1] This is the most received report. Another is that the Caliph, fearing that Abu Muslim shared the Alyite tendencies of which Abu Salma was suspected, sent Abu Jafar to sound Abu Muslim; and that the latter, to prove his loyalty, despatched an assassin who committed the deed as above narrated.

Abu Muslim at the same time sent agents to put to death all the governors who had been appointed by Abu Salma while he ruled in Fars.

[2] Abu Muslim was jealous of this man's influence; and had conceived a hatred for him, because when Ibrahim first selected Abu Muslim as the Hashimite plenipotentiary in Khorasan, Ibn Kethir had sought to dissuade him on account of his extreme youth. Abu Muslim never forgave him, and now took advantage of the incautious speech to put him to death.

Abu Muslim's pilgrimage, 136 A.H.

1000 men. He started with 8000, but left 7000 at Rei. The Caliph received him with every mark of honour, and gave permission to proceed to Mecca; but informed him that his brother Abu Jafar would probably be appointed to preside at the Pilgrimage, a dignity Abu Muslim had apparently expected for himself. Meanwhile Abu Jafar, who now resided at the Court, and both hated and feared the Viceroy, persuaded his Brother to order his execution; he was to be cut down from behind as he was conversing with the Caliph. But the Caliph changed his mind. Dreading the revenge of the Khorasan troops, should he put their favourite to death, he withdrew the order. The Pilgrimage accordingly was undertaken by Abu Jafar and Abu Muslim both together. But though the former led the ceremonial, he was outshone by the splendour of Abu Muslim's equipage and his princely liberality. The Pilgrimage completed, tidings of the Caliph's death reached the returning caravan. Abu Jafar had Abu Muslim now entirely in his power, but he was obliged, as will be explained in the following chapter, to veil his hatred for a time.

Abul Abbas dies on 13 xii. 136 A.H. 9th June 754 A.D.

Abul Abbas died of smallpox in his palace at Anbar, a few days after the pilgrimage at Mecca was ended. His age is given at from twenty-eight to thirty-five years. He left a daughter,[1] afterwards married to her cousin the Caliph Mehdy. Abul Abbas was vain of his appearance, and little is said by the annalists of his death, beyond a description of the varied wardrobe which he left behind. It is also related of him, that as he stood looking at himself in a mirror, he exclaimed, "I do not say, as Soleiman, "*Behold the kingly youth*; but I say, *Lord, give me long* "*life, and health to enjoy it.*" As he spoke, he heard a slave say to his fellow hard by, regarding some mutual concern, "The term between us is two months and five days." He took it as an evil augury; and so he sickened, and death overtook him as the term expired.

Thus closed the sanguinary reign of Abul Abbas, which lasted a little less than five years, during the last two of which he resided in the Palace now completed at Anbar. Of public undertakings, the only thing we are told is that he had towers constructed for protection of the pilgrims at convenient distances all the way from Kufa to Mecca, and also mile-stones. Khalid the son of Barmek (the "Barmecide"), of whom mention has been already made, accompanied Cahtaba from Balkh, and being a man of singular ability was promoted by the Caliph to be chief of the Exchequer, and with the rest of the family attained a high position at Court. In the last year of his reign Abul Abbas nominated his nephew Isa to be Heir-apparent after his brother Abu Jafar. The patent, inscribed upon a silken sheet, and sealed with the signets of the Caliph and of the chief heads of the Royal family, was placed in custody of himself, now governor of Kufa.

---

[1] Only a daughter, we are told. A son indeed is mentioned as accompanying Isa in the expedition against the Alyites, 145 A.H.; but as he is not spoken of elsewhere, he was probably of ignoble birth.

A.H. 132-136.

Palace of Hâshimiya, and public works.

Isa nominated heir-apparent after Abu Jafar.

The name by which Abul Abbas is most commonly known is *Saffâh*, the Blood-thirsty, and he is well so called; for as such he is distinguished beyond all others in a Dynasty that had small respect for human life. He intensified his cruelty and guilt, if that were possible, by treachery in the face of solemn oaths, and also by ingratitude, for amongst his victims were not a few who had spent their lives in helping him to the throne. That the attempt should have been made to extenuate his crimes is strange; and is thus referred to by the impartial Weil, in whose judgment I concur;—

Saffâh the Blood-thirsty.

> "We can but marvel," he says, "that many Europeans have sought to defend this Caliph who was worse than any Omeyyad,—as if he did not deserve the name of Blood-shedder, which indeed he himself assumed. He may not with his own hands have strangled victims; but not the less was it by his express mandate that the Omeyyads in Syria, and Soleiman in his very presence, were perfidiously slain. At his command must Abu Muslim hire the assassin of Abu Salma, to whom the Abbassides owed so much. It was at his repeated requisition that Abu Jafar, in treacherous disregard of solemn oaths, slew Ibn Hobeira and his fellows; and it certainly is not due to his innocence that the fate of Abu Salma did not during his own reign overtake Abu Muslim also. Abul Abbas was not merely a barbarous tyrant; he was a perjured and ungrateful traitor."

Such is the not overdrawn character of the first of the Abbassides, Abul Abbas, Saffâh, the "Blood-shedder."

CHAPTER LXI

ABU JAFAR, MANSÛR

136–158 A.H. 754–775 A.D.

Abu Jafar Dzul Hijj, 136 A.H. June 754 A.D.

AT the death of Abul Abbas, Abu Jafar, as we have seen, was on pilgrimage at Mecca. His cousin, Isa, whom the late Caliph had nominated as second in succession, caused Abu Jafar to be at once proclaimed at Kufa, and the oath of allegiance was taken accordingly. On receiving tidings of his brother's death, Abu Jafar returned immediately to Kufa. He inaugurated his succession by leading the prayers in the Great mosque with the usual address, and then went on to the palace at Anbar. He assumed the name of Mansûr, the Victorious.

Rebellion of Abdallah, the Caliph's uncle.

Abu Muslim, as already said, was also on Pilgrimage with him. Abu Jafar, directly on hearing of his Brother's death while on the homeward route, sent for him, and told him that he feared the attitude of his uncle Abdallah. Abu Muslim bade him set his mind at ease, promising in the event of Abdallah's rebellion to proceed at once against him. There was ground for the alarm. Abdallah was in command of a powerful force on the border of Asia Minor. He now asserted that his brother the late Caliph had promised him the succession in reward for his campaign against Merwan; and so, persuading the army to do homage to him as Caliph, he set siege to Harran. Abu Jafar was the more anxious for the services of Abu Muslim, as there were in his uncle's army 17,000 men of Khorasan devoted to their old leader. Abu Muslim now marched against Abdallah, who on his approach raised the siege, and marched north to Nisibin, where he entrenched him-

A.H. 136–158.

Defeated by Abu Muslim, ii. 137 A.H. Nov. 754 A.D.

self in a strong position; but on his way, fearing the Khorasanies just referred to, he cruelly put the whole of them to the sword.[1] To decoy him from his stronghold, Abu Muslim made as if he would march for Syria; on which the rebel army, mostly Syrians, alarmed for their families, insisted upon following the same course; and then Abu Muslim returning, occupied the deserted vantage-ground. Fighting went on for five months with various success, but in the end, through Abu Muslim's able tactics, the Syrian army was totally discomfited. Abdallah fled, but was eventually placed under charge of his brother Soleiman, governor of Bussorah.

Fall and death of Abu Muslim, 137 A.H.

The thankless Caliph, instead of rewarding a man who had founded, and now had saved, his Throne, was bent on his death as one for whom, having served his purpose, he had no further need, and whom he both feared and hated. While yet on the field of battle, the great warrior divined the temper of his Master, who, much to his mortification, had sent a courier to take count of the spoil; and bethought him of retiring for safety to Khorasan. This, in fact, was what the Caliph dreaded; and so with many fair words that he wished to keep him near his person, he offered him the government of Syria and Egypt. Abu Muslim replied that there was ever danger in a powerful subject being near the Court; at a distance he would be the Caliph's devoted servant; but otherwise he would have no alternative but to break allegiance. An angry correspondence ensued, and Abu Muslim began his march to Khorasan. At Holwan, he received a peremptory mandate to repair to Medain, where the Caliph waited for him. Distracted by various counsel,—friends, once faithful but now won over to deceive, advised him to obey; and so, trusting to fair promises, he proceeded to the Court. As he drew near, Abu Ayub, the Vizier, fearing the warrior and his

---

[1] The enormous butchery of 17,000 soldiers is narrated without comment. Cruelty and treachery seem innate in the whole family. On two occasions in his march, Abdallah sent chiefs whom he was afraid of, to his creatures elsewhere, with letters which they unsuspectingly carried containing orders for their ssassination. One of them had occasion to open his missive, and so escaped.

A.H. 136–158.

Fall of Abu Muslim.

followers if he came in wrath, bribed one to meet and assure him of the Caliph's favour and good will. Abu Muslim's apprehensions thus disarmed, he entered the Palace, and was graciously welcomed; kissing the Caliph's hand, he was bidden to rest awhile and refresh himself with a bath. The following day, again summoned to the Court, the Caliph at first addressed him softly thus;—"Tell me of the two daggers that Abdallah had." "Here," said his guest, "is one of them," and he handed it to the Caliph, who put it under his pillow. Then with some warmth,—"And the girl of his whom thou tookest!" "Not so," replied Abu Muslim; "but I feared for her, and so carrying her to a tent left her in safe custody." On this, with growing warmth Abu Jafar brought charge upon charge against the ill-fated man,—Why had he slighted him on the Pilgrimage? set out for Khorasan against his orders? made himself out, though once a mere slave, as if of Abbasside descent, and sought the hand of the Caliph's aunt? and worst of all, why had he slain Ibn Kathir, long before him an early and faithful supporter of the Dynasty?[1] As he waxed fiercer at every charge, Abu Muslim could but urge his lifelong service to the Throne, kiss the Caliph's hand, and plead for pardon. But in vain. Abu Jafar clapped his hands, and at the signal five armed men stepped from behind the curtain, and as the victim cried aloud for mercy, cut him in pieces, while the Caliph cursed. To calm the crowd without, it was told them that "the Caliph was in conclave with his Ameer"; and believing it to be so, Isa, the Heir-apparent, entered and asked where Abu Muslim was. "He was here but now," answered the Caliph. "Ah," replied Isa, "I knew that he was loyal and would obey thy call." "Fool that thou art!" cried Abu Jafar;—"Thou hadst not in all the world a worse enemy than he; look there!" he said, as the carpet was raised revealing the mangled corpse. Isa horrified retired.

---

[1] See above, p. 445. The charge of making himself out of Abbasside descent was true enough. When in the zenith of his glory, there were not wanting creatures who, to cover his servile origin, invented a story of Abbasside descent; a fatal adulation that only added fuel to the Caliph's jealousy.

Death of Abu Muslim.

Shortly after, Abu Ishac, one of Abu Muslim's staff, was summoned; "What hast thou now to say about thy master? asked the Caliph, and his intended move to Khorasan!" Terrified, he glanced first to the right and then to the left, as if fearing lest Abu Muslim might be near to overhear. "No need for fear!" exclaimed the Caliph; and the covering was again removed. "Thanks be to the Lord!" cried Abu Ishac, as he bowed low and long in worship; and, gazing at the corpse exclaimed,—"Thanks for my deliverance from thee, O tyrant!" Then turning to the Caliph,—"I swear, not a day passed that I felt my life my "own for fear of him, nor came into his presence but pre-"pared for death." So saying, he drew aside his robe and disclosed a winding-sheet beneath. Moved with pity, the Caliph spared him the fate which, as an adherent of his fallen chief, he was in expectation of.

Character of Abu Muslim.

Having received the congratulations of his courtiers, who wished him joy that now at last he was the real King, Abu Jafar went forth and harangued the multitudes brought together by the startling news:—"It was," he said, "a lesson to be laid to heart; the man began well, but "ended ill, and now by pride and rebellion hath forfeited "his life." The scene is one the annalists dwell much upon; and rightly so. For Abu Muslim is without doubt the leading figure of the age. Hardly thirty-five years old, he had by his rare wisdom, zeal, and generalship, changed the whole outlook of Islam, and raised the house of Abbas upon the ruins of the house of Omeyya. He deserved his fate, no doubt, for the blood of multitudes was on his head,—but not at the hand of Abu Jafar, who owed his all to him. It was jealousy of Abu Muslim's influence that had fed the Caliph's hatred. The estimate of Isa was the truer; for there is nothing in the acts or attitude of Abu Muslim to show that he was other than a loyal supporter of the Dynasty which owed its existence to himself.[1]

---

[1] 600,000, we are told, "met their death at his hands in cold blood, besides those slain in battle":—a wild estimate, no doubt, but significant of his contempt of life. Apart from this, his character was popular, and gave him the supreme command of men. Hospitable and generous, he held in

A.H. 136–158.

Story of Abu Nasr.

The story of Abu Nasr, whom Abu Muslim had left in charge of his camp at Holwan, is also worth recording. Abu Jafar, desirous to have this able officer in his power, sent him a summons, as if from Abu Muslim, to come at once to him at Court with all his goods, and sealed it with his master's seal. But Abu Muslim had warned his friends not to hold any letter from him genuine unless it bore but half his seal. Detecting the deception thus, Abu Nasr fled to Hamadan. To calm suspicion, the Caliph then sent a patent appointing him governor of Shahrzor; but at the same time also a letter to the governor of Hamadan to take his life as he passed. The former first arrived, and so starting at once, Abu Nasr escaped the intended fate. At last, seeing no security anywhere, he sought the Caliph's presence, and confessing that he had advised his master to seek refuge in Khorasan, threw himself on his Sovereign's mercy, and promised faithful service. Abu Jafar let him go; and his clemency, as we shall see, had its reward.

Peace restored in Persia and Mesopotamia, 138 A.H. 756 A.D.

It was not for another year or two that peace was restored either in Mesopotamia or Persia. In the latter, serious rising threatened the Empire under a singular leader, Sinbad the Magian, who stepped forth as the avenger of Abu Muslim, and with a large following gained possession of the country from Rei to Nisabur.[1] A similar rebellion followed in Mesopotamia, where the Imperial forces were repeatedly defeated. In the following year, however, victory crowned the army of the Caliph, and peace was restored both there and in Persia.

The Caliph, relieved thus of all the dangers that had threatened him, might now have left his uncle Abdallah alone at Bussorah; but hearing that he had, mistrusting

---

Khorasan a Court of great magnificence. Simple in respect of his Harem, he was yet strangely jealous. The mule that brought his bride was slain and the saddle burnt, that none might ride again on it.

[1] Whether the Magian counted Abu Muslim one of his followers, is not quite clear. There must apparently have been something more than mere regard for his memory. The rising was serious, as multitudes of women were carried off, and in the end 60,000 of his followers (so we are told) were killed, besides captives. He was two and a half months in the field.

A.H. 136-158.

his Nephew, retired for safety into hiding, Abu Jafar sent to his uncles, Soleiman and Aly, command to bring him to Court. Relying on the solemn promise of full pardon, they brought him, and presented themselves before the Caliph. He received them graciously, and engaged them in conversation, while his uncle Abdallah, who remained without, was carried off a prisoner to the castle. After a little while, he bade them go and rejoin Abdallah. Thus overreached, they returned angrily to expostulate, but were denied admittance. Their followers, enraged at the perfidy, would have offered resistance, but were disarmed, several put to death, and the rest sent to Khorasan, where they met the same fate. The wonder is that in so faithless, treacherous, and cruel a monarch, any confidence anywhere was left. The reason no doubt is that such shameless breach of faith was only practised when personal or dynastic danger threatened. Apart from this, as a whole, the administration of Abu Jafar was wise and just.

Caliph imprisons his uncle Abdallah. End of 139 A.H. 757 A.D.

During 138 A.H. Constantine waged war with the Syrian army, and took Malatia, destroying its fortifications. The following year it was retaken, repaired, and heavily garrisoned. The campaign is remarkable for the presence of two Princesses, cousins of the Caliph, who joined the army in fulfilment of a vow taken some years before, that if Merwan fell they would serve in the Holy war against the infidels. The Caliph now entered on an exchange of prisoners with the Emperor, and a truce of seven years was agreed to; for events at home had begun to occupy every resource at his disposal.

Fighting in Asia Minor, 138-9 A.H.

In 140 A.H. the Caliph performed the yearly Pilgrimage, visited Jerusalem, and made a progress through Syria and Mesopotamia. On his return a strange rising placed him in imminent personal danger. A Persian sect, called Rawendies (from the name of their town), holding such doctrines as the immanence of divinity and transmigration of souls, visited the Court. The commandant of the Bodyguard, they held, was inhabited by the soul of Adam; another courtier by that of Gabriel, and so on; while the Caliph was the adumbration of Deity itself.

Pilgrimage, 140 A.H. 758 A.D.

A.H. 136–158.

Rising of Rawendies at Hâshimiya, 141 A.H.

Surrounding the Palace, they shouted, "It is the house of our Lord, he that giveth us food to eat and water to drink." The Caliph had 200 of their leaders imprisoned, which so enraged the rest that they stormed the prison and rioted all round. Abu Jafar ventured forth without an escort to quell the uproar; but the wild sectaries, no longer regarding him divine, made an onset, and had it not been for Abu Nasr (already mentioned) and an Omeyyad adherent,—who thus secured courtly favour,—both throwing themselves between the rioters and the Caliph's person, it would have gone hard with him. Troops fortunately came up at the moment, and the Rawendies, on whom the people shut the city gates, fled in confusion.[1]

Mehdy's campaign in Khorasan, 141 A.H.

Soon after, the governor of Khorasan rebelled, and Abu Jafar sent Ibn Khozeima, a general of note, to put the outbreak down, and with him his own son and heir, Mehdy, now about twenty years of age. On their approach, the rebel was attacked by his own people, who, mounting him backward on an ass, sent him thus to the Caliph. Both he and his followers were treated with horrid cruelty, and tortured till they gave up all they possessed. The hands and feet of the rebel Governor were cut off, he was then beheaded, and his son sent in banishment to an island in the Red Sea.

And Tabaristan, 141–3 A.H. 758–60 A.D.

The Moslem arms were now directed against Tabaristan, of which the ruling Ispahend had cast off subordination to Islam. The campaign was prosperous. In the following year, however, the Prince again rebelled, and in his impregnable fortress defied attack. But a pretended deserter having ingratiated himself and gained his confidence, opened the gates to the Moslem force. The fortress taken thus, the fighting men were put to the sword, and their families made captive. Mehdy chose two of the maidens for himself, and the Ispahend's daughter was taken by his uncle.[2] The army then

---

[1] The Caliph could not find a horse to mount, till he picked up one on his way. Stables were now attached to the Palace, for there had been none before.

[2] Such slave-girls are only mentioned in connection with issue borne to

A.H. 136–158.

turned towards Deilem; but here the insurrection was so serious, that a fresh levy was ordered from Irac and Mosul, which was kept in the field all the following year. Meanwhile, Mehdy returned to court; and being now twenty-three years of age, married Rita, the only child of his uncle, the late Caliph. He then returned to Khorasan, where he remained for some time longer. The Caliph went this year, as he did several other times, to preside at the Meccan pilgrimage.

Mehdy returns, 144 A.H. 761 A.D.

A new danger now threatened the Dynasty. It was from a descendant of Hasan son of Aly. The head of this family was Aly's grandson Abdallah, whose two sons Mohammed and Ibrahim had for some time held ambitious designs.[1] Abu Jafar entertained suspicions against them ever since his first Pilgrimage, when they failed to present themselves. As usual, he proceeded by stratagem. A creature of his, by feigned communications from Khorasan, where there ever was a strong faction for any scion of the house of Aly, gained their father Abdallah's confidence, and succeeded in so implicating him that with all the family he was cast into prison. The two sons, however, escaped to Aden and Sind, and returning secretly to Irac, now at Medina, now among the Bedouin tribes,—were hunted everywhere by the Caliph's emissaries. On his pilgrimage in the present year, Abu Jafar demanded of the father and relatives, who were still in prison, that they should deliver up the two sons now in hiding. Failing to do so, the family were carried off to Kufa, and treated with shocking barbarity. The son of Ibrahim, a fine youth, was told by the cruel Abu Jafar that he would die a death worse than any he had ever heard of; and the tyrant was as good as his word, for he was built up alive into the prison wall.[2] Of the rest, some were slain

Mohammed and Ibrahim, descendants of Hasan, rebel, 144 A.H.

---

their Masters, otherwise they were taken as the conquerors might fancy into their Harems as a matter of course, and without any special notice by our historians.

[1] See table, p. 395. Mohammed is the one with whom Ibn Hobeira tried to communicate when besieged in Wasit. *Supra*, p. 442.

[2] I give the story as I find it, though hardly credible.

A.H. 136–158.

and some poisoned; but few were spared. The head of one was sent round Khorasan as that of Mohammed the elder brother, in the hope of disheartening the party there.

Rising at Medina and Bussorah, 145 A.H. 762 A.D.

These atrocities, followed by stringent measures for the discovery of Mohammed, then in hiding at Medina, precipitated his rebellion there, while his brother Ibrahim canvassed for him at Bussorah. At Medina, the city rose, the Governor was cast into prison, and the administration proclaimed in the name of Mohammed; around whom rallied the great body of the citizens, though many held back from fear of the Caliph. On tidings reaching the Court,[1] Abu Jafar was much concerned, for although Alyite disturbances had hitherto been mainly on the side of Hosein's descendants, the position and claims of the house of Hasan (Aly's elder son) were, to say the least, not inferior. He at once addressed to Mohammed a despatch, in which, after various threats, he offered pardon and ample maintenance to the whole family. The Pretender sent an indignant answer; it was rather for him, he said, to offer pardon to Abu Jafar, who had usurped the rights of the progeny of Aly by Fatima the Prophet's daughter, in virtue of whom alone the Hashimite cause had any ground whatever to stand upon. And, even so, what trust could be placed on the word of one who had so flagrantly broken it already with Ibn Hobeira, Abu Muslim, and his own uncle? The Caliph replied in a despatch of weary length, in which, dwelling on the inferiority of woman, he scorned the claim of Fatima and of female descent in general, and extolled the Abbassides as the male, and therefore ruling, line of the Prophet's house.[2]

Correspondence between Caliph and Mohammed.

Nothing gained by argument, Abu Jafar had recourse to the sword. He was the more alarmed as it had become a popular cry at Kufa, that "Khorasan was with the "Abbassides, Irac with the Alyites, and Syria with the "infidels who would readily follow any rebel." In fact, however, the emissaries of Mohammed found no support in Syria, where, after so much suffering, the people were glad to be at rest; and his chief following was at Mecca, Medina, and Bussorah. Against Medina, the present centre of rebellion, the Caliph now sent his nephew Isa, with a Syrian army. And it is characteristic of his treacherous instincts that he told a familiar he would be equally pleased whichever fell, *Mohammed* or *Isa*, whom he was now scheming to supplant as Heir-apparent, in favour of his own son Mehdy. Apart from the prevailing sentiment of sacrilege in fighting against a descendant of Mahomet, Isa had no very difficult task. Mohammed, following the example of the Prophet, set himself to digging a trench about the City: but on the approach of Isa, the inhabitants fled in crowds, and Mohammed was left with but a small body of faithful followers. Rejecting an amnesty, he girded on him the Prophet's sword, Dzulficar,[1] and went forth to fight, but fell pierced by an arrow. His head, sent to the Caliph, was paraded about Kufa and other cities. At Medina, the bodies of the slain were hung up along the Syrian road for three days, when they were cast into the Jewish burying-ground; but at the intercession of his sister, that of Mohammed was buried in the ancient graveyard of Backie.[2] Medina suffered severely in consequence of the rebellion. The Syrian troops were so overbearing that the slaves rose *en masse*; the Governor had to fly; and it was only the fear that Abu Jafar would utterly destroy the City, that led the insurgents to call him back. The hands of the leaders were cut off, and peace at last restored. To mark his displeasure, the Caliph stopped the supplies on which the city depended by sea, and the embargo was not removed till the accession of his son.[3]

---

[1] The messenger was nine days on the road, and received from the Caliph 9000 dirhems, *i.e.* 1000 for each day.

[2] A very lengthy and curious document it is, elaborately reviewing the history of the house: *e.g.* Fatima's not inheriting the property of her father, Aly not succeeding till after three other Caliphs, the insignificant part taken by Aly's family in the *rôle* of Islam, etc. It is very unlike a document written under the circumstances, and probably a bit of servile pleading to please the Abbassides.

Isa discomfits Mohammed at Medina, 145 A.H. 762 A.D.

14 ix. 145 A.H.

Rising of slaves.

A still graver danger threatened from Bussorah.

---

[1] *Life of Mahomet*, p. 238.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 192.
[3] Supplied from Egypt since the reign of Omar, *supra*, p. 174.

A.H. 136-158.

Ibrahim continues the rebellion at Bussorah.

There, Ibrahim, after canvassing in secret, had already raised the standard of rebellion in his brother's name. Ever inclined to insurrection, Bussorah now with ardour embraced the cause; and numbers of the learned,—amongst them the great doctor Malik ibn Anas,[1]—gave in their adhesion to it. The Imperial troops were defeated, the Palace stormed, and the treasure distributed amongst Ibrahim's supporters. Fars, Ahwaz, and Wasit were occupied by the Rebels, and other places where the cause was rife. On receiving tidings of his brother's death, Ibrahim set up on his own account, and started for Kufa, where he had expectations of a general rising. Though here and elsewhere he had 100,000 on his roll, he was followed now but by 10,000. Nevertheless the crisis was sufficiently grave to alarm the Caliph. He was at the moment laying out the new capital of Bagdad; but on receiving tidings of Ibrahim's advance, he hastily retired to Kufa, where the populace were ready to break out and join the descendant of "their own Caliph Aly." The troops were all away in Persia, Africa, and Arabia, and but a small garrison left at headquarters. News kept coming in of defection all around, while at Kufa "100,000 of the Kufa rabble were ready to rush against the Caliph with their swords." In the utmost distress Abu Jafar swore that if he got over the crisis, he would never leave the Capital with less than 30,000 men. For seven weeks he kept curtained in his closet, sleeping on his carpet of prayer, and never once changing dress but for his black robes at Public prayer. Two damsels were sent as a gift to him: "They will feel slighted, his attendant said, if thou wilt not go in unto them." "That I will not," he answered, "it is no day for women this: I will not go in unto any maiden, until I see at my feet the head of Ibrahim,—or mine be cast at his." At last the tide turned. Mehdy sent troops from Rei which put down the rising in Fars and Ahwaz, while Isa hastened from Medina to anticipate Ibrahim's attack on Kufa. The two armies encountered each other sixteen leagues from

Kufa rises.

Abu Jafar alarmed.

---

[1] One of the four great heads of Moslem jurisprudence.

that City. The vanguard of Isa's army at first beaten back, carried part of the main body with it, and for the moment, the Alyite banner seemed in the ascendant; but shortly after Ibrahim was shot by an arrow, and his army fled. Thus after holding the Empire for three months in terror, the Alyite rebellion came to a close.

Ibrahim defeated and slain, 24 xi. 145 A.H.

At the first tidings of Isa's army giving way, the heart of Abu Jafar failed, and he was on the point of flying to his son at Rei. Correspondingly his joy was unbounded when the head of Ibrahim was cast at his feet. It was "like the delight," he said (quoting from the poet), "of the thirsty wayfarer coming on a living stream." But, before the world, he veiled his joy; and as in public he took the gory head of the rebel in his hands, he wept and spake well of him. His indignation fell terribly upon the city which had supported the claims of the pretender. Not only were houses confiscated and demolished, but, what was a more lasting calamity, the date-groves all around Medina were cut down.

Abu Jafar's joy at the intelligence.

When this cloud had passed away, Abu Jafar returned to the site of his new capital, Bagdad, whose foundations had been laid in the previous year. It was the danger he was exposed to from the onset of the Rawendies that first convinced him of the need of a more secure Court residence. The Royal residence at Hâshimiya was too near fickle and restless Kufa, the disloyal factions of which and Bussorah might sap the faithfulness of his guardsmen. Searching as far as Mosul for a likely spot, he found one on the right bank of the Tigris, some fifteen miles above Medain, mentioned in the wars of Mothanna as "old Baghdad."[1] A monastery was near, and the Patriarch and Monks spoke well of the climate, water, and surroundings. Here, accordingly, Abu Jafar resolved to found the new Capital of Islam. The lines of the city wall and chief places were dug,[2] vast stores of material collected,

Bagdad founded, 145 A.H. 762 A.D.

---

[1] P. 97.

[2] As a perpetual evidence of the city lines, burnt cotton rags mingled with sand were buried in the foundations; a mode familiar in the East, as the rain causes the cotton ash indelibly to stain the soil all round.

Bagdad founded.

bricks burned, and artificers summoned from all parts of the Empire. The first brick was laid by the Caliph's own hand with these words,—"In the name of the Lord! praise "belongeth unto him and the earth is his: He causeth "such of his servants as he pleaseth to inherit the same. "Success attend the pious! Now, with the blessing of the "Lord, build on!" The walls were but a few feet high when news of Ibrahim's rebellion made the Caliph hasten back to Kufa; and the intendant left in charge, fearing lest the mass of stores should fall into the enemy's hands, set them on fire, much to his master's disappointment.

146 A.H. 763 A.D.

No sooner was Ibrahim discomfited, than Abu Jafar returned to the work. Khalid the Barmecide, now put in charge, remonstrated against the demolition of Medain, with its ancient memories of Seleucia and Ctesiphon,—to provide material for the new Capital. "The great Iwan "of the Chosroes," he argued, "is one of the wonders of "the world; and there, too, Aly had his place of prayer." "Ah!" replied the unconvinced Caliph, "it is naught but "thine old love for the Persians!" The noble arch, however, hard as iron, withstood the pick-axe. "Now," said Khalid, "I advised thee against it; but as thou hast "begun, go on, lest men should upbraid thee, saying that "the Caliph began but could not pull down that which another had built up!" So the work went on; but it was of no use. And there on the river's left bank still stands the grand monument in majesty, while all around is now a bare and sandy plain. For the portals, Kufa, Wasit, and even Damascus, were robbed of their iron gates. The walls were built in a circle so that none of the courtiers might be far from the Palace, which with the Great Mosque lay in the centre; while the bazaars were thrust outside. The cost of the whole was four million of dirhems.[1]

---

[1] The iron gates from Wasit were cast by Hajjâj, and of Kufa by Khalid ibn Abdallah. The Greek ambassador having been taken round the city, said: "It is beautiful; but thine enemies are with thee in the market-places." Whereupon the Caliph had all the bazaars removed outside towards Kerakh, saying that they invited attack for plunder, and gave also lodgment for spies. The initial cost was about £200,000. An overseer (ustâd) got every day a kirat of silver, and the common labourer two pence (hubbas).

Bagdad as a military position.

Lying on the west bank of the Tigris, with deep canals in rear, and ready access to the Persian Gulf,—as well as to Arabia, Syria, Armenia, and the East,—Bagdad, besides holding Kufa, Wasit, and Bussorah, in immediate check, was admirably situated as the heart of the Empire. The eastern shore, more open to attack, was provided with accommodation for a large force, which was thus further cut off from the heated influence of Kufa and Bussorah. Separate cantonments were here also planted for the Yemen and for the Modhar clans, as well as for the Khorasan levies. While there was safety in the diverse interests of the three, it was to the Khorasan levies that Abu Jafar mainly looked for his own protection; and also as a countervailing power to lower the pretensions of the Arab soldiery, who still lorded it over the nations as the flower and chivalry of Islam; and in this unwise design the Abbassides (as already noticed) too soon succeeded, and too well. A few years later, a Palace was built also on the eastern bank for Mehdy, called Rusâfa, and there on his return from Khorasan, he welcomed and fêted his friends and kinsmen.

Rusâfa, 151 A.H. 769 A.D.

Rafica and other defences.

It was hardly in the mind of Abu Jafar that his new Capital should become the grand and populous emporium which it speedily did. Rather, he founded it purely for his Court as a strong military position, and enjoined it on his Son not to permit the growth of any suburbs, especially on the left bank. The same policy led him to establish on the upper reaches of the Euphrates a strong citadel, Rafica, opposite Ricca, which should hold the country on either side of the river under control. He is said to have attributed (and with reason) the sudden fall of Merwan to his having had no such stronghold to fly to after his defeat on the Zab, and hence to have spent the more pains in this direction. The defences of Kufa and Bussorah were also strengthened.[1]

---

[1] Both cities were assessed with a poll-tax to defray the expense, for which purpose Abu Jafar resorted to a characteristic device. He first distributed a largess of five dirhems to all comers; then taking the numbers of the

A.H. 136–158.

Mehdy appointed heir-apparent, 147 A.H. 764 A.D.

In the eleventh year of his reign, Abu Jafar resolved on a project long in his mind of making his son Mehdy, now twenty-five years of age, Heir-apparent in place of Isa. On his nephew refusing, Abu Jafar was much displeased, degraded him from the seat of honour on his right, and treated him with contumely. Failing in his endeavours, he told Isa that he knew it was for his son Musa he was desirous of the succession; on which some of the courtiers set upon Musa as if to strangle him; and Isa, alarmed at his cries, thereupon consented that Mehdy should precede him as Heir-apparent.[1]

Caliph's double plot against Isa and Abdallah, 147 A.H. 764 A.D.

But Abu Jafar hated Isa the more, and contrived a plot,—more cruel and cunning than can well be conceived, to be rid at once of him and of his uncle Abdallah, who still lingered on in prison. He made Abdallah over to Isa, with the private command to put him to death, while he himself was away on pilgrimage to Mecca. When thus absent, he wrote asking whether the order had been carried out, and was assured that it had. But Isa here told an untruth; he had not put his uncle to death. By advice of his secretary, who suspected treachery, he had only put him away in hiding. And so it turned out. For on the Caliph's return, the friends of Abdallah were set up to beg for his pardon. This the Caliph granted, and Isa was bidden to make Abdallah over to them. "Didst thou not bid me put him to death? said Isa; "and I have done as thou bade me." "Thou liest," replied the Caliph; and he made Isa over to Abdallah's brethren to wreck their vengeance on. But as they were carrying him off, Isa upbraided the Caliph; "Thou com-

recipients, he assessed each at forty dirhems. A squib was in everyone's mouth:—

"Mark, my friends, the Caliph's bounty,
He gives us five, and then takes forty."

---

[1] The Caliph is even said to have given Isa a poisonous drink, from which, however, retiring for a while to his government at Kufa, he recovered. Another story is that the Caliph got Khalid the Barmecide to suborn witnesses who swore that Isa had resigned his right. Such traitorous traditions, right or wrong, show what a wretched character for deception Abu Jafar bore, which allowed them to get abroad.

"mandedst me to put him to death, that thou mightest be "rid both of him and me; but here he is alive"; and forthwith Abdallah was brought out, to the mortification of the Caliph. It was, however, of little avail; for Abdallah was cast into a cellar with a damp and deadly saline floor, and so at last expiated his rebellion by a virtually violent death. Isa in disgrace was deposed from the government of Kufa, which he had for thirteen years ably administered.

A.H. 136–158.

Isa deposed.

Turning now to the dependencies of the Empire, we note that Spain was during this reign finally detached from the eastern Caliphate. Even under the former Dynasty it had got much out of hand. In a long intestine struggle, the Modhar had at last triumphed over the Yemen faction, and set up Yusuf as ruler. A son of the Omeyyads was now to take the throne. This was Abd al Rahman, grandson of Hisham. He had escaped the massacre of his house in Palestine, and we have a touching story of his flight and wanderings. Hiding in a village by the Euphrates, his little boy rushed to him with the terrified cry, "The black flags! the black flags coming!" Abd al Rahman got off with a cousin of thirteen, and swam the river; the lad, unable to stem the tide, turned back on the cry of an amnesty, but was put to death by the cruel soldiers. Hiding in the forest by day, and journeying stealthily by night, Abd al Rahman at last reached Africa, where he was joined by his Sister, and a faithful servant Bedr with the family jewels. He narrowly escaped the governor of Africa, father of Yusuf, and reaching the western coast, succeeded in sending Bedr across the sea to tell the Omeyyad adherents of his arrival. These sent a ship for him, and he landed in Spain early in 138 A.H. With the help of the Yemenites, who rallied enthusiastically round him, he entered in triumph the palace of Cordova. The whole Peninsula was against the Abassides. As Syrians they favoured the Omeyyads. The Kharejites, a numerous faction, who would have preferred an Alyite to the Abbasside branch of the Hashimite house, made no opposition. And so the Spanish nation, weary of

Spain.

Abd al Rahman escaping from Syria,

Lands in Spain, iii. 138 A.H. Aug. 755 A.D.

A.H. 136-158.

Omeyyad Caliphate in Spain, 148–157 A.H. 765–774 A.D.

discord, after several ineffectual risings, fell under the unquestioned sway of Abd al Rahman. The Caliph of Bagdad, indeed, once and again sought to gain a footing by his emissaries. Failing in his endeavours, he sent an embassy to King Pepin, which, after remaining several years at the Gallic court, came back with a deputation from the Franks. These eventually returned to Europe laden with rich Oriental gifts. Nothing, however, came of the negotiation, excepting, perhaps, that apprehension of attack from the Christian monarch may have forestalled any hostile intention of Abd al Rahman against the Caliph of Bagdad. The Abbasside suffered the Omeyyad to remain in peace; and so Spain henceforward falls altogether out of view.

Africa.

Africa, though for a time, unlike Spain, independent neither in name nor in fact, was for the greater part of this reign almost equally out of hand. Both Berbers and Arabs, leaning towards the Kharejite heresy, disowned the Abbasside succession. Over and again Generals were sent to fight against them, but with little success. Among these was Aghlab, father of the founder of the Dynasty of that name; he was killed near Tunis, where his grave was honoured as a martyr's. Cairowan was repeatedly taken and retaken. Rebellion ruled till near the close of his reign, when the Caliph, now relieved of his other adversaries, was able to send a great army which for the time restored Abbasside authority over the entire country.

155 A.H.

Armenia, 145 A.H.

There were troubles also at different times elsewhere, but not such as seriously to threaten the Empire. In Armenia, the Khizr hordes issuing from their passes, made great havoc, and carried away multitudes of men and women prisoners. An army sent to punish them was cut to pieces; Tiflis was taken, and Armenia remained long in revolt. In the East, a serious rebellion was led by the ruler of Herat, Ustad Sîs, who set up as a prophet and, followed by an immense army, possessed himself of great part of Khorasan and Sejestan. Beating the Imperial troops, he carried everything before him, till he was overcome by the tactics of Ibn Khozeima who, after great

Rising at Herat, 150 A.H.

slaughter in the field, put 14,000 prisoners to the sword.[1] The rebel fled; but afterwards gave himself up, and with the remainder of his followers was spared. Kheizran, daughter of this Chief, was taken by the Caliph's son Mehdy into his Harem, and became the mother of Hady and Harun.

Rising at Herat,

Another rising took place, about the middle of this reign, in the country round about Mosul. It caused the greater alarm, because a strong Alyite feeling prevailed in Hamadan, from whence the revolt was led. The rebels, supported by the Kurds, spread over Persia and reached as far as Sind. They were eventually put down; but Abu Jafar was so incensed against Mosul, that he thought of utterly demolishing it; and was only dissuaded by the advice of the great doctor, Abu Hanîfa, who declared the project opposed to the law of Islam.[2]

And Mosul, 148 A.H.

The riots in Mosul led to Khalid the Barmecide being promoted to the command of that city, with which is connected a curious episode. For some cause, the Caliph had demanded of him a penalty of three millions, to be made good in three days (so the tale runs) on pain of his life. His son Yahya begged all round of his friends, but on the third day there was still short a tenth of the sum, when fortunately the alarming news from Mosul led to the choice of Khalid for the post. The Caliph started with him at once, as if for Ricca on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; then turning suddenly north, he arrived at Mosul unexpected, and so taking the Governor unawares, deposed him and installed Khalid in his room. Khalid's administration, severe, but tempered with kindness, was much appreciated, and he remained there till the Caliph's death. His son, Yahya, at the same time was appointed to Azerbijan. At Rei there was born to Yahya a son named Fadhl, simultaneously with Mehdy's son Harun, whose

Khalid the Barmecide governor of Mosul.

---

[1] The numbers are no doubt exaggerated. The rebel's army is put at 00,000, of whom 70,000 fell in the battle, besides the prisoners slain.

[2] The opinion is not embodied in very edifying language. It is to the fect that a woman who has gone astray is not on that ground open to out-ge; neither was Mosul. Abu Hanîfa died two years later.

A.H. 136-158.

mother suckled both; and so Harun and Fadhl were reckoned foster-brothers.[1]

Abu Jafar's son at Mosul.

A romantic tale of the early life of Abu Jafar while a refugee at Mosul, illustrates at once his character and the manners of the age. While in concealment in the city he married an Arab maiden. Leaving her with child, he gave her a document which he bade her present at Court whenever the family should come to power. In due time, the lady's son, Jafar by name, went to Bagdad, and became secretary to Abu Ayub, the Vizier. In that capacity he served the Caliph as a scribe, who took a liking for him, found out his history, and saw the note he had left with his mother. Accordingly he despatched the youth to Mosul, bidding him bring his mother to Bagdad. But Abu Ayub, who was now jealous of the favourite, sent men to assassinate him on the road. Days passed, and getting no tidings, the Caliph set on foot a search for Jafar. The facts transpired; and the crime brought home to the Vizier, he was not only put to the death he deserved, but the same fate was meted out to his brother and nephews, who were also executed with barbarous cruelty.[2]

Vizier put to death for his murder, 153-4 A.H.

Asia Minor, 158 A.H.

The last few years of the Caliph's reign were free from anxiety, domestic or foreign. In a raid on Laodicæa, 6000 women and children were taken captive. Shortly after, the Emperor asked for peace and submitted to the payment of a yearly tribute.

Illness and pilgrimage of Caliph, 158 A.H.

Towards the close of 158 A.H., Abu Jafar, who had already gone several times on pilgrimage, prepared to assist at the annual Ceremonial. On the road to Kufa, he fell sick, and rested in a castle by the way with his son Mehdy, to whom, apprehending that his end was near, he gave much wholesome advice on the obligations that would devolve upon him. He warned him against allowing Bagdad to spread on the eastern bank; bade him return to their owners various properties he had unjustly confiscated. "It will make thee liked, he said, and will "strengthen thy hands: and see," he added, "that thou "make much of the men of Khorasan, for they verily have "expended their lives and means on our behalf." After several days thus passed, he bade his son a sorrowful farewell, and proceeded onwards. As he journeyed, the illness increased, and he said to his servants:—"Haste thee with "thy master, who now fleeth from his sins, unto the sacred "territory of his Lord!" While yet three miles from Mecca he died in his camp, and was buried in the Holy city.[1] He reigned nearly twenty-two years, and was aged about sixty-five. He had issue by three wives: and also by three slave-girls, of whom one was a Kurd, and one a Greek.

---

[1] The demand from a faithful servant of three millions on pain of death, seems almost incredible; but it is chronicled without any expression of surprise, nor is any imputation of embezzlement mentioned. It is curious that Ibn Athir repeats the incident 158 A.H., just before the Caliph's death; but no doubt the earlier date is the right one.

[2] Their hands and feet were cut off while still alive. It is possible, but not so stated, that they also may have been implicated in the crime.

His death; end of 158 A.H. Oct. 775 A.D.

If we could forget his perfidy in compassing the death of such as he feared and hated, our estimate of Abu Jafar would be very different. As a Moslem, his life was religious and exemplary. Nothing profane or unseemly was ever seen at his Court. He was diligent in the business of the State, to which he devoted the first part of every day: the afternoon he spent with his family: and again, after evening prayer, he heard the despatches of the day and ook counsel with his Ministers, retiring late to rest and ising with the dayspring for Morning prayer. The army was fitted throughout with improved weapons and armour; nd the Minister employed in this department relates he was worked so hard by the Caliph that, though he began with not a white hair in his head, in nine months he had ot a black one left. His hand was light, yet firm, upon is Governors, and the administration consequently good. ut he was parsimonious, and hoarded the revenues to uch an extent that, as he told Mehdy, he had amassed easure sufficient for ten years' expenditure. With all his ood qualities, nevertheless, the verdict must be against

Character of Abu Jafar, Mansûr.

---

[1] One hundred graves were dug about the city; but he was buried in other, that no enemy might know and desecrate the spot.

A.H. 136-158.

Abu Jafar as a treacherous and cruel man. His victims, it is true, did not approach in numbers those of Saffâh the Bloody; but he was not less unscrupulous than he in taking life wherever personal interests were concerned, and even exceeded him, though on comparatively rare occasions, in refinement of perfidy, and heartless cruelty.

Influence of Persia; political, social, and literary.

During this reign the East began to exercise a marked effect on the manners and habits of the West. Persian costume, with the tall Zoroastrian hat,[1] became the fashionable dress at Court. Scholars from the East held high and influential place. Magians came over in large numbers to the faith, and brought with them the learning and philosophy at once of Indian and of Persian lands. The Arabs lost their pre-eminence not only in the Army and at Court, but in society at large. Hitherto the dominant caste, looking down with contempt on Nations every way their superiors in science, art, and culture,—they were now fast sinking to a lower level. As already observed, tradition, no longer oral, began to be embodied by the great Doctors of the law in elaborate systems of jurisprudence adapted to the expanding range of Islam, and the necessities of an advancing civilisation.[2] Literature, History, Medicine, and especially Astronomy (for Abu Jafar was given to astrology) began to be studied.

The foundations were thus laid for the development of intellectual life in subsequent reigns. And all this is mainly due to the encouragement given to the people of Khorasan and Persia, as well as in some degree also to the more liberal intercourse now growing up with the Grecian empire in the present reign.

---

[1] Calansua.

[2] Two of the four great founders of the recognised systems of law, Abu Hanîfa and Malik ibn Anas, flourished in this reign. Neither was much esteemed at Court; the latter, as we have seen, supported the claims of Ibrahîm at Bussorah; and the former having declined to be Cazee or judge of the new capital, Bagdad, which office the Caliph desired him to hold at its foundation,—accepted instead the humbler charge of looking after the bricks and buildings there. The popular tradition is that he ended his life in prison for his refusal to be Cazee.

CHAPTER LXII

MEHDY, SON OF MANSÛR

158–169 A.H. 775–785 A.D.

Mehdy, 158 A.H. 775 A.D.

Favourable reign.

Growing laxity of manners.

THE ten years' reign of Mehdy, who immediately succeeded his father Abu Jafar, is mainly noticeable as a mean between the rough and vigorous rule of the first Abbassides, and the palmy days which followed,—a kind of preparation, as it were. Mehdy was by nature mild and generous. He inaugurated his accession by opening the prison doors to all but the worst and most dangerous class of felons. The treasure accumulated by his father gave ample means for profuse liberality. He enlarged and beautified the Mosques of the Holy cities, and of the capital towns elsewhere.[1] The pilgrim caravanserais, provided now with fountains and establishments, were made commodious and secure. The postal service, accelerated on mules and camels, was greatly developed. Imperial agents,[2] located at the provincial centres, kept the Court nformed of the progress of public affairs, which throughout the Empire were administered, upon the whole, with ustice and moderation. Cities were put in good defence; and especially Rusâfa, the eastern suburb of Bagdad. The Capital became already an emporium of trade with all parts f the world. Music, poetry, literature, and philosophy efined the age; while the example of the Court, both as o wine and the fair sex, tended to laxity of manners. rincely progresses were repeatedly made by Mehdy with

---

[1] Ibn Athir tells us, 630 A.H., that he saw in the court of the Mosque of osul a slab with an inscription ascribing its extension to Mehdy.

[2] "Ameens."

A.H. 158–169.

Pilgrimages.

his Court to Jerusalem and the Holy cities, the cortege being supplied with ice from the mountains, all the way to Mecca. There he clothed the poor and distributed among the Citizens largesses of almost fabulous amount. The coverings of the Kaaba sent yearly by the Caliphs had hitherto been left draped one over the other; and, being of rich brocade, they had latterly become so weighty as to endanger the edifice. These were now removed, and their place supplied by the single covering sent every year by Mehdy,—a precedent followed by succeeding Caliphs. Five hundred *Ansârs*, or citizens of Medina, now followed the Caliph, as an Imperial guard, to Bagdad, where lands were assigned for their support;—a wise measure, which if maintained might have checked the insolent and dangerous pretensions of the Turkish soldiery at Court; but the practice must have been given up, for we hear no more of these Medina men.

Guard of Medina men.

There was, however, another side to the administration of Mehdy, marked occasionally by outbursts of hideous cruelty.[1] Early in his reign a dangerous rebellion was raised by one Yusuf in Khorasan. He was taken prisoner, carried with his comrades, face backwards, on a camel, and thus brought into Rusâfa. There the Caliph had the rebel's hands and feet cut off, and then with all his fellows decapitated. The case of Yacub, his Vizier, is also illustrative of the life at Court. He had been previously arraigned as an adherent of the house of Aly, and as such imprisoned by Abu Jafar. Released by Mehdy, he became his favourite, the boon companion of nightly revels, and Minister of unbounded power throughout the Empire. His prosperity at last raised enemies, who poisoned the ear of the Caliph against him as if he were still devoted to the Alyite faction. To test his loyalty, Mehdy had recourse to stratagem. Invited to spend the evening in a beautiful

Cruel treatment of a rebel, 160 A.H.

And of his Vizier.

---

[1] Weil extenuates such barbarities by the prevailing contempt of life amongst Mahometans of the day, and the consequent necessity for adding pains and penalties to simple death; also by the statute of the Coran for punishing robbers with the loss of limb. But the extenuation is altogether inadequate.

garden, Yacub found the Caliph seated in the company of a slave-girl of surpassing charms. The minister was overpowered by the enchanting scene. "Ah!" said the Caliph, "it is indeed a paradise of delights; and I will "give all to thee, and this damsel with it, if thou wilt rid "me of that Alyite,"—naming one he had doomed to death. Yacub embraced the offer with transport, and became at once the happy master of the fairy scene. The Alyite was at once summoned to his fate; but he pleaded his case so warmly that Yacub was softened, and bade him fly the place. The maiden, curtained close by, having heard it all, let the Caliph know. And so, when Yacub assured his Master that he had carried out his wish, the truth came to light, and Yacub was cast into a pitch-dark prison, where he remained so long that he lost his sight.[1]

Cruel treatment of his Vizier,

Another Minister, who had faithfully attended Mehdy throughout the campaigns in Khorasan, incurred the resentment of a courtier named Rabie, who, finding no other ground of escape, accused his rival's son of being a Manichæan heretic. The Caliph called the son, and examining him on the Coran, found him ignorant of its contents, and thereupon judging the imputation proved, had him beheaded. The father was deposed, and Rabie succeeded to his office.

And of a Minister's son,

Persecution of Manichæans.

Hatred of the *Zendics*, or Manichæan Sectaries, indeed, and their cruel persecution, is one of the chief traits of Mehdy's life, and of his son Hâdy's short reign. During the stay of Mehdy in Khorasan, he had imbibed an intense abhorrence of their tenets, which not only contravened Islam, but loosened the bonds of social and domestic morals. Suspicion whispered into the Caliph's ready ear, led often without trial to a fatal end. Thus a blind poet, ninety years of age, was arraigned by enemies, smarting

---

[1] Yacub relates that after he had remained in utter darkness, he knew not how many years, he was summoned to the presence, and desired to make obeisance to the Caliph, who asked, "Knowest thou who I am?" "Surely it is Mehdy," he replied. "Ah," said the Caliph, "he has long ago been dead." "Then Hâdy." "He too is dead." "Then Harun." "That I am," answered the Caliph, who thereupon granted his request of permission to retire to Mecca.

A.H. 158–169.

under his satires, on charge of this heresy, and notwithstanding his poems being free of the taint, put to death.

Inquisition, 167 A.H.

At Aleppo, on his way to Syria, Mehdy had a gathering of Manichæans, hunted out from all that neighbourhood. They were all beheaded, and their bodies cut in pieces. Thereafter he established a department of State with a minister whose duty it was to put down the heresy,—a kind of inquisition; and accordingly we read in the following year of "a great multitude" being apprehended as heretics and put to death.

Mocanna claims divine honours in Central Asia, 158–161 A.H.

Another strange but ephemeral heresy gave trouble beyond the Oxus. It was led by a fanatic, who, from masking his ill-favoured countenance, was called *Mocanna*, the Veiled one. He taught the immanence of the Deity in Adam, in Abu Muslim, and lastly in himself. Vast multitudes of Turks, as well as Moslems, followed and worshipped him as god. For four years, in Bokhara and surrounding provinces, they beat back column after column of the Moslem troops. At last fortune turned against the impostor, who, deserted by the rest, found refuge with 2000 of his followers in a fort. Then reduced to straits, he set fire to the place, and calling on his women and all who would ascend heavenward with him, to follow his example, cast himself with them into the flames, and perished. The report of this scene gave fresh impulse to the sect, and though practised secretly, long time passed before it died out in the East.

War in Asia Minor, 159–162 A.H. 775–778 A.D.

War was waged with Greece throughout the greater part of the reign. Inroads into Asia Minor as far as Ancyra, led to reprisals by Michael,[1] who ravaged the Syrian border and inflicted a serious defeat on the Moslem arms. To avenge the injury, Mehdy marshalled an army of 100,000 men, and with it crossed the Euphrates to Aleppo. Thence he sent forward in command his son Harun, though hardly yet twenty years of age; who,

---

[1] Lachanodrakon. It is illustrative of the Caliph's arbitrary rule that on one of the generals retiring before Michael's superior force (164 A.H.), he was on the point of punishing him by death; but on the intercession of his friends cast him instead into prison.

A.H. 158–169.

accompanied by Khalid the Barmecide, as guardian, and supported by able generals, made a victorious march along the coast as far as the Bosphorus. There the regent, Queen Irene, was obliged, on payment of heavy ransom, to conclude a peace, and, moreover, to provide for the safe return to the frontier of Harun, who had got entangled in defiles. The spoil was immense, and the number slain incredible.[1] It is interesting to note that in the early part of this reign, a descent from Africa to restore Spain to the Caliphate ended in disaster; and that, on the other hand, the "Ruler" of Spain[2] had in preparation an expedition against the Abbassides in Syria, which he was hindered from carrying out by troubles at home.

Campaign of Harun to the Bosphorus 156 A.H.

Spain, 161–3 A.H.

There were expeditions in other quarters, but none requiring notice, excepting perhaps that to India, which stormed the city of Barbad, and burned the image of Budd, with a company of its worshippers. But the end was disastrous: the army lost 1000 men by a "mouth disease," and the fleet was wrecked by a storm on the Persian shore.

India, 160 A.H.

Shortly after his accession, Mehdy gave her freedom to Kheizran, the mother of his sons Musa and Harun, whose influence over him even in affairs of state was great, and then married her. The unfortunate Isa, whom Abu Jafar had forced to postpone his claim to that of Mehdy, was now compelled altogether to relinquish his title to the Throne,—a claim which he had now held for three-and-twenty years; and Musa, now surnamed *Hâdy* (the Guide), was proclaimed Heir-apparent. With Harun, the younger son, his father was so pleased after the expedition to the Bosphorus, that he placed him, though still quite a youth, in charge of all the Western provinces including Azerbijan, and two years later proclaimed him, under the title of *Rashîd* (the Upright[3]), second in succession. But Harun was so much the favourite of his mother, and was also so pre-

Mehdy marries Kheizran, 159 A.H.

Hâdy Heir-apparent, 160 A.H. and Harun, 166 A.H.

---

[1] 54,000 Greeks slain; 5000 taken prisoners, of whom 2090 were "executed in cold blood"; 20,000 cattle driven off, and 100,000 slain.

[2] He is called simply the Omeyyad *Sâhib* (ruler) of Spain.

[3] Or "rightly directed." Pronounced Hârûn ar Rashîd.

A.H. 158–169.

ferred by his Father, that he went a step further, and a year or two after called on Hâdy to waive his claim of precedence in his brother's favour. Hâdy, at the time prosecuting a campaign in Jorjan, naturally resisted the demand, and treated contumeliously a second messenger, summoning him to Bagdad. Mehdy thereupon, accompanied by Harun, set out with an army to reduce his contumacious son, but died on the way from eating a poisoned pear intended by one of his slave-girls for a favoured rival.[1] He was buried on the spot, aged forty-three, in the beginning of the year 169 A.H., Harun performing the service over the bier.

Mehdy's death, 22 i. 169 A.H. July 785 A.D.

Character of Mehdy.

Little more need be said of the character of Mehdy. His administration was upon the whole such as to promote the welfare of the Nation, and usher in the brilliant era that followed; but his life was stained by many acts of tyranny and cruelty, nor was it altogether even in private such as a rigid Mahometan would approve. Naturally soft and amiable, he maintained unabated to the end his attachment to Kheizran, the princess of Herat who it will be remembered was introduced as a slave-girl into his youthful Harem. It is also told of him that he so doted on his young daughter Yacuta (the "Ruby"), that he could not let her out of his sight even when in public; and so, dressed in male attire, she used to ride out by his side. He was disconsolate when she died a year before him; but in the end was comforted by the condolence of his friends.

Attachment to Kheizran and a favourite daughter.

---

[1] Another account is that out hunting his horse rushed after the hounds and game into a ruin, and that, struck by the lintel, he was killed. But this is hardly consistent with the mystery that plainly surrounded his death, of which the army accompanying him only knew on their return to Bagdad.

CHAPTER LXIII

HÂDY AND HARUN AL RASHID

169–193 A.H. 785–809 A.D.

Hâdy, 169 A.H. 785 A.D.

HARUN wisely recognised the succession of his brother Hâdy, and at once despatched to him in Jorjan the imperial seal and sceptre. The army that had accompanied his Father was dismissed to Bagdad, where it broke out into mutiny, stormed the Vizier's house, and demanded largess. Kheizran summoned the Vizier and Yahya son of Khalid the Barmecide; but the latter, knowing Hâdy's jealousy of his mother, took upon him, without waiting on her, to satisfy the troops by a two years' grant. The Vizier, who obeyed her call, nearly forfeited his life for doing so; but by the offer of large gifts regained the Caliph's favour.

Alyite rising at Medina.

In the short reign of Hâdy few events occur of interest outside the Capital. There was a Kharejite rising in Mesopotamia; and also an Alyite, in Mecca and Medina. Strange to say, this last arose from the intemperance of some members of the saintly house of Aly, who for drinking wine were paraded with halters about their necks in the streets of the Holy cities. The family thereupon broke out into rebellion, and some hard fighting was needed before peace could be restored. Among those who escaped was Idris, great-grandson of Aly. Aided by postal relays, he made his escape through Egypt to Tangier, where he was welcomed by the Berbers, and laid the foundation of the Idrisite dynasty. The postmaster of Egypt was beheaded for having connived at his flight.[1]

Idris escapes to Africa.

---

[1] Some authorities lay this at the door of Harun, and Weil charges it against that Caliph as one of his cruel acts.

A.H. 169-193.

Hâdy resents interference of Kheizran.

Though Hâdy resembled his Father in most things, in one he differed, for he would not allow Kheizran to have any hand in the affairs of State. Accustomed as that lady had been to crowds of suitors seeking influence with her Husband, when she attempted the like with her son, he bade her mind her own concerns, withdrew her escort, and forbade the courtiers to wait upon her.[1] The proud woman smarted under the insult, and watched the opportunity for revenge.

His cruel treatment of heretics.

In his treatment of the Manichæans, Hâdy followed too closely at once the counsel and example of his Father. Strange to say, there were amongst these heretics several of Hashimite descent, whom Mehdy, having sworn never to take the life of any of his own house, left to his son with the fatal injunction to put them all to death. How this pestilent heresy found adherents amongst the faithful of Arabia and Irac, is difficult to understand, and one may hope that of many sins laid to their charge, they were falsely accused.[2] Shortly before his death Mehdy declared that he would destroy the whole brood of Zendics, root and branch; and he is said to have ordered a thousand palm-stakes to be erected, on which as many heretics should be impaled,—a report, the existence of which shows at anyrate the prevailing belief in the intensity of his hatred towards the sect.

Hâdy endeavours to supersede Harun.

Following his father also in another respect, Hâdy formed the project of setting his brother aside, and proclaiming his young son Heir-apparent. He was supported by all the court, excepting Yahya the Barmecide, who succeeded once and again in dissuading him from so precipitate and unwise a step. Harun, now treated with indignity, retired into private life. At last, after much vacillation, the Caliph, at the instigation of the creatures around him, who were forward to take the oath, proclaimed his Son successor, and cast Yahya into prison. Hâdy was just then at his country seat near Mosul; and there he fell sick and died. His end is obscure. The ordinary version is that when he sickened, his Mother induced certain of his slave-girls to smother him. We are told further that she had despatches in readiness for the various Governors to recognise the succession of Harun, which would imply complicity of some kind in the death of Hâdy. We hear little more of her; and she herself died shortly after.

---

[1] He is even said to have attempted to poison her, but the imputation is doubtful. Weil thinks it was fabricated to justify the Queen Mother's unnatural conduct towards Hâdy.

[2] Thus the daughter of one of these condemned Hashimites is said to have confessed that she was with child by her own father, and when carried before the Caliph died of fright.

His death.

On his brother's death, Harun, now nearly twenty-five years of age, emerging from his retirement, hastened to the Court, performed the funeral obsequies, and was saluted Caliph without opposition. Hâdy's young son was easily persuaded to drop his claim; but a circumstance connected with it showed thus early that Harun though called *Rashîd*, was as prone to vindictive cruelty, if moved to hate or jealousy, as any of his predecessors. When some time before, Harun was about to cross the Tigris, the courtier in charge of Hâdy's son called out from the other side of the bridge to "stay until the Heir-apparent had passed over"; and Harun answered angrily;—"The Ameer's humble servant!" The incident rankled in his breast, and on his accession he had the unlucky courtier put to death.

Harun succeeds, 170 A.H. 786 A.D.

Instance of capricious cruelty.

On the day of accession, his son Mamun was born, and Amîn some little time later;—the latter, as son of Zobeida granddaughter of Mansur, taking precedence over the former, whose mother was a Persian slave-girl. As the new Caliph crossed the bridge re-entering Bagdad, he bade divers to search in the river for the "Mountain," a famous ring worth 100,000 golden pieces, given to him by his Father. On Hâdy's demanding this ring, he had some time before flung it into the Tigris; and now as he pointed out the spot, it was discovered by the divers, to his great delight.

Recovers his ring in the Tigris.

Yahya the Barmecide, whom Hâdy had imprisoned and threatened with death, was now brought to Court,

The Barmecides.

A.H. 169–193.

The Barmecides.

and installed as Vizier. His two sons, Fadhl and Jafar, also exercised unbounded power;—the former, foster-brother of the Caliph, and a statesman of unrivalled ability;[1] the latter, the favourite of Harun and boon companion of his privacy. These were the three leading men of the Barmecide house, the fall of which, seventeen years later, has left an indelible stigma on the Caliph's name.

Harun's religious life.

Harun is noted for his careful observance of the ritual of Islam: daily he performed one hundred prostrations, and distributed 1000 dirhems in alms. In the first year of his reign he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and repeated it afterwards some nine different times. On every occasion he scattered munificent largesses amongst the people, and carried in his train crowds of indigent pilgrims. He was surrounded also by a magnificent court, both when on Pilgrimage and on other journeys, and by a host of learned men, doctors of the law, poets and philosophers; and it is in part these princely progresses that have shed so great a lustre on this reign.

Magnificent court.

Wise, and, on the whole, just.

Harun was perhaps the ablest ruler of the Abbasside race. He is likened to Abu Jafar, but without his parsimony. If we except some flagrant instances of tyrannous cruelty, his government was wise and just; as without doubt, it was grand and prosperous. Bold and active in his habits, he followed up his early campaign against the Greeks, by repeatedly himself again appearing in the field. Eight or nine years after his accession, he forsook Bagdad and set up his court at Ricca, in the north of Syria. This he did ostensibly to hold disloyal Syria in check, in spite (as he would say) of his loving Bagdad better than any other place in the whole world. But it seems likelier that he had contracted an aversion towards Bagdad, for he never again resided there, and seldom even visited it.

Dislikes Bagdad, and retires to Ricca.

Rising at Mosul, 171 A.H.

In the second year of this reign, a serious rising under a Kharejite leader stirred the whole province of Mosul

---

[1] See above, p. 466. The two mothers suckled each other's babes. The relation of foster-mother is much esteemed in the East.

A.H. 169-193.

into insurrection. Abu Horeira, the governor of Mesopotamia, was discomfited by the rebel, who gained possession of the City. Fresh troops were despatched, and in the end peace was restored. But the Caliph was so displeased with the failure of Abu Horeira, that he was in consequence brought to Bagdad, and there put to death.

Death of Abu Horeira.

The security of the Syrian frontier was the early care of Harun, both on the side of Armenia threatened by the Khizr hordes, and of Asia Minor by the Greeks. One of his first acts was to create a new charge towards the west, under a Turkish general,[1] with Tarsus as its strongly fortified headquarters. War was waged almost every year with the Greeks, and Harun over and again either joined his forces, or watched their progress on the frontier, for which his residence at Ricca gave him easy opportunity. The Moslems also began to be successful at sea; Crete and Cyprus were attacked and the Greek admiral taken prisoner.[2] In the raids on the frontier, a multitude of captives and vast booty were secured. But fortune varied; there were serious reverses, and on one occasion, severe loss and suffering from cold in the passes. In 181 A.H., Harun headed a large force in person, and Constantinople being distracted at home, great victories were achieved as far as Ephesus and Ancyra. Prisoners were thereafter exchanged; 4000 Moslems were recovered amid great rejoicings; and Irene, on payment of tribute, obtained a four years' truce. An advance was subsequently made by Casim, the Caliph's third son; but withdrawn on the Greeks sending in several hundred prisoners.

Asia Minor.

Created separate government, 170 A.H.

Naval operations, 175 A.H.

Harun takes the field, 181 A.H.

Irene tributary, 186 A.H.

Soon after, Nicephorus having succeeded to the throne, sent this insulting epistle to the Caliph:—"From Nicephorus, king of the Greeks, to Harun, king of the Arabs.

---

[1] The first notice of a Turkish chief placed in a military command. We shall soon find them coming to the front in all departments, and especially at the head of the Moslem armies.

[2] This from Greek authorities, who state that on refusing to embrace Islam, Harun had him beheaded. Moslem writers do not mention him.

A.H. 169–193.

Insulting letter of Nicephorus, 187 A.H. 803 A.D.

"Irene hath parted with the castle, and contented herself "with the pawn. She hath paid thee moneys, the double "of which thou shouldest have paid to her. It was but a "woman's weakness. Wherefore, return what thou hast "taken, or the sword shall decide." Harun reading the letter fell into a rage, and calling for pen and ink wrote on the back of the letter:—"From Harun, Commander "of the Faithful, to Nicephorus, dog of the Greeks. I "have read thy letter, son of an unbelieving Mother. "The answer is for thine eye to see, not for thine ear to "hear." And Harun was as good as his word; at once he started and ravaged the land as far as Heraclea, before the Emperor, hampered by rebels, had stirred a step; and so an ignominious peace, and renewed tribute, were the end of such foolish boasting. Over and again when Harun was engaged elsewhere, Nicephorus broke his treaty, and as often was beaten. At last, near the close of his reign, the Caliph marched again with 135,000 men, took possession of Heraclea, and besides tribute, reduced Nicephorus to the contempt of a personal impost on himself and on each member of the Imperial house. Cyprus was anew overrun; 10,000 prisoners carried off to Syria; and for the ransom of its Bishop alone, 2000 golden pieces had to be paid. But in the following year the Greeks once more advanced, and inflicted severe loss on the enemy both at Marash and Tarsus, which Harun, having trouble elsewhere on his hands, was not in a position to retrieve. The end of it all,—the bitter end of all such wars,—was to inflame religious hate. The Caliph caused all churches in the border-lands to be cast down, and the obnoxious distinctions of dress and equipage to be enforced with the utmost rigour upon the Christian population.

Harun's reply.

Disasters of Nicephorus, 190 A.H. 806 A.D.

191 A.H.

Africa: opposition of native tribes, 178–81 A.H.

Africa continued further and further to drift from Abbasside control. After various fortune of victory and defeat, Harthama, an able general, was despatched with a large force, and succeeded in beating down opposition; but a short experience convinced him that hostile interests throughout the land were so inveterate as to leave little

Harthama retires.

hope of eventual success; and, anxious now for the more attractive field of the East, he resigned. Thereafter the Aghlabite dynasty, though at first nominally subordinate to Bagdad, became eventually independent at Cairowan; as already was the Idrisite at Tangier in the farther West.

Syria: tribal fighting, 176–7 A.H.

Mosul, 178–80 A.H.

Kharejite rising in Armenia and Holwan, 177 A.H.

In 176 A.H., the ancient Syrian jealousies between the two Arab stocks of the North and South, broke out into open feud, and kept Damascus for two years in continual ferment; a state of things, however, which gave the Caliph little concern, as it simply weakened the power of the disloyal Syrians. Ten years afterwards they began again to fight against each other; but this time Harun interfered to compose their differences. Somewhat later Mosul was the scene of a rebellion, which lasted two years, until Harun himself took possession of the city, razed its walls, and was again with difficulty dissuaded from destroying it altogether. A still more alarming outbreak occurred at Nisibin under a Kharejite leader, who, after ravaging Armenia and Azerbijan, descended on Mesopotamia, and crossing the Tigris to Holwan, held the whole province in terror. In the end he was defeated and slain. This campaign is notable for the beautiful elegy of Leila on the death of her brother the rebel,—to avenge which she had ridden forth disguised in armour, but retired in maidenly confusion on being recognised by the general of the Caliph's army. Harun was so alarmed at the near approach of this danger, that to commemorate the victory, he performed in thanksgiving both the Lesser and the Greater pilgrimage, visiting on foot the various Holy stations.

Treacherous dealing with the Hasanite prince of Deilem, 176 A.H.

Passing over various outbreaks on the outskirts of the Empire, there is one of these in the north which deserves notice as illustrating the faithlessness of the Caliph. Yahya, a descendant of the Prophet's grandson Hasan, having gained possession of Deilem, grew so mightily in power as o extend his kingdom to the borders of the Caspian, and ttract to his brilliant court followers from all parts of the world. Harun, jealous at once of his influence and of his istinguished birth, sent Fadhl the Barmecide, then gover-

A.H. 169-193.

Harun's treachery towards Deilemite prince.

nor of Persia and Jorjan, with a great army to oppose him. Yahya was drawn into an apparently friendly communication with Fadhl, and agreed that he should submit to the Caliph a proposal for presenting himself at Bagdad under a covenant of honourable treatment, the bond to be witnessed not only by Doctors of the law but by representatives of the Hashimite house. Harun, overjoyed at the prospect of being rid of his rival, confirmed the covenant, and in due course received him with much distinction and princely gifts; but shortly after he allowed his jealousy to override his conscience. The chief Cazee was obsequious enough to discover a flaw in the document; but an equally distinguished Doctor declared that the covenant made with a power backed by an army in the field, was indefeasible. Harun, nevertheless, supported by the former, cast Yahya into prison; and having called for the solemnly attested document, tore it into shreds.

Amîn heir-apparent, 175 A.H.

While yet but five years old, Harun's son by Zobeida, preferred in virtue of his noble birth, was nominated Heir-apparent, under the title of Amîn. Some years later, his other son, Abdallah, several months older, was declared the next successor, both being now twelve years of age. The latter, surnamed Mamun,[1] was placed under the guardianship of Jafar the Barmecide, and at an early age given charge of Khorasan and all the countries from Hamadan to farthest East. On a brilliant Pilgrimage to Mecca, the Caliph presented each of these sons with the munificent gift of a million golden pieces, and caused two documents, witnessed by the chief ministers of state, to be hung up with solemn ceremony in the Kaaba, inscribed, one in favour of Amîn, the other of Mamun. He also gave Mesopotamia and the Greek frontier in charge of Casim, his youngest son, who might, but only at the discretion of Mamun, succeed to its eventual sovereignty. Further still, some years later, when on a journey to the East, he willed (a singular condition) that the army, with all its treasure and munitions of war, should fall to the lot

And Mamun, 182 A.H.

Harun's arrangements at pilgrimage, 186 A.H. 802 A.D.

189 A.H.

---

[1] One in whom faith is placed, "the Trusted": Amîn signifying "the Faithful"; grand epithets, if they had only been true.

A.H. 169–193.

of Mamun; and he caused oaths of allegiance to the three sons to be renewed both at Bagdad and throughout the Empire in accordance with these arrangements. People marvelled that so wise a ruler should so soon forget the lessons of the past, and from such strange provisions foreboded evil in the future. It is not often that our annalists indulge in reflections such as these; but here we have the proverb applied by them to Harun, "Self-conceit makes "a man both blind and deaf."

Harun's sons.

Fall of the Barmecides.

We now come to the startling narrative of the fall of the Barmecides. The course of this distinguished family has been already traced, from its rise in Balkh, through successive generations, to the highest posts of honour and influence in the State. Yahya, son of Khalid, now advanced in years, had resigned office into the hands of his sons Fadhl and Jafar. The former, possessed of boundless authority, and regarded by the people with love and esteem, was virtual ruler of the empire. The latter, more given to indulgence, was the constant companion of Harun's hours of pleasure and amusement; yet he also must have inherited the ability of the house, having had charge of the youthful Mamun with the whole government of the East, and though only thirty-seven years of age, had held the Vizierate for seventeen years. Poets were never weary of extolling the Barmecides, nor historians of narrating their virtues, munificence, and power. Suddenly Jafar was put to death, and the family disappears from the scene. The cause assigned was this:—

Story of Jafar's disgrace,

Jafar, as said above, was the boon companion of the Caliph, who loved to have his sister Abbasa also with him at times of recreation and carousal. But Moslem etiquette forbade their common presence; and, to allow of this, Harun had the marriage ceremony performed between them, on the understanding that it was purely nominal. But the ban was too weak for Abbasa. A child given secret birth to was sent by her to Mecca; while a maid, quarrelling with her mistress, made known the scandal. Harun when on pilgrimage ascertained that the tale was

A.H. 169-193.

but too true. On his return to Ricca, shortly after, he sent a eunuch to slay Jafar, whose body was despatched to Bagdad, and there, divided in two, impaled on either side of the bridge. It continued so for three years, when Harun, happening to pass through Bagdad from the East, gave command for the miserable remains to be taken down and burned. On the death of Jafar, his father and brother were both cast into prison at Ricca, and orders passed all over the empire to confiscate the property of any member of the family, wherever found. Both Yahya, an aged and now heart-broken man, and Fadhl, yet young but paralysed from the shock, died in confinement shortly before Harun himself. Men grieved at their death; poets sang the praises of Fadhl, and annalists fill their pages with tales of his princely generosity, and laud his memory as one of the most distinguished of mankind. The grandeur, power, and popularity of the house, as well as the services it had rendered to the dynasty, both in the conduct of the Empire and upbringing of the minor Princes, intensified the tragedy and the scandal before the public; and although other causes have been assigned, the fact of Jafar's violent end leaves little doubt as to the general accuracy of the story given above. Harun himself kept a mysterious silence. Once questioned by his beautiful and accomplished sister Oleiya, he is said to have stayed her with these words;—"Life of my soul! "if but my innermost garment knew of it, I would tear it "into shreds."[1]

And death, 187 A.H.

And fall of whole Barmecide family.

Another murder.

The painful episode was followed by the murder of Ibrahim, a faithful friend of Jafar, who mourned over his loss, and in private spoke bitterly of his miserable end.

---

[1] Weil has gone very fully into the question, and leaves little room to doubt the outline as a whole. The story is one eminently fitted to excite the Oriental imagination. Thus Ibn Khallican, in his gossiping way, tells us that Abbasa, conceiving an uncontrollable passion for her husband, persuaded his mother (who used to send a slave-girl every Friday night as her son's companion) to make use of her for once instead. She was sent accordingly in disguise, and Jafar, under the influence of wine (nabidh), discovered the deception but too late, and then was overcome by terror at the possible results. It may be a tale, but even so, it points to the popular belief, and

The Caliph hearing of this, invited him to a convivial bout alone, and having plied him with wine, pretended to mourn the loss of Jafar, whom, he said, he would now willingly part with half his kingdom to have back again. Ibrahim thus deceived, began in his cups to unbosom himself to the apparently repentant monarch, in praise of Jafar and grief at his death. Whereupon Harun cast him out, cursing him as a traitor, and shortly after had him put to death.

Fall of Barmecides.

We turn with relief to notice what was passing on the outskirts of the Empire. The East was fast becoming firmly consolidated under the strong Turkish interest at court. There was, indeed, a serious rebellion under a Kharejite leader, who ravaged Persia and the outlying provinces as far as Herat, but it was at last put down by the governor, Aly ibn Isa. Some years after, the Caliph, hearing unfavourable reports of his lieutenant's tyranny, marched with Mamun to Rei. There, to answer the charges against him, he summoned Aly, who by splendid gifts to the Caliph and to the court rendered his position again secure. Harun stayed four months at Rei, which he loved, as his birthplace, and there receiving duty in person from the Native chiefs to the north,—who still retained something of their ancient power under the suzerainty of the Caliphate,—he settled the affairs of Tabaristan, Deilem, and other provinces in that direction. He then returned by Bagdad to his court at Ricca.

Persia and Khorasan, 180 A.H.

Harun visits Rei, 189 A.H.

Some little time later a serious rebellion arose in the East out of a strange origin. A wealthy lady in Samarcand, whose husband had been long absent in Bagdad, bethought herself of another, and being told that it was the easiest way of dissolving the knot, abjured Islam and

Rebellion of Rafi in Samarcand, 190 A.H.

---

the notices both in prose and verse are entirely in accord. Some authorities pass the matter by in silence, or attribute it to other causes,—as, escape of an Alyite offender by Jafar's connivance; his princely palace exciting Harun's jealousy; Yahya's entering the presence without authority; Alyite tendency of the family, etc.; but all are inadequate for the execution of Jafar and downfall of the family.

Abbasa and her child are also said to have been made away with, but this is doubted.

Rebellion in Samarcand.

then married her suitor, one Rafi. The first husband complained to the Caliph, who, scandalised at the affront on the Moslem faith, not only ordered that Rafi should divorce the lady, but be paraded on an ass and cast into prison. Thence, however, he effected his escape, and after wandering about the country, returned to Samarcand, slew the governor, and raised the standard of rebellion. Aly ibn Isa, alarmed lest Rafi should steal a march on Merve, quitted Balkh, and set out thither; on which, Rafi rapidly gained possession of all the country beyond the Oxus. Meanwhile reports again reached the Caliph of the tyranny and rapacity of Aly, and so, with the double view of superseding him, and subduing this rebellion, he sent Harthama, now returned from his African command, with a large force, and secret orders to assume the Government. Arrived at Merve, Harthama at first received Aly graciously, but shortly after, showing his patent of command, confiscated the vast wealth of the tyrant, and despatched it on 1500 camels to the avaricious Caliph. Aly himself, seated on a bare-backed camel, was sent in disgrace to Ricca,—the common fate of rulers of the day.

Harthama supersedes Aly ibn Said, 192 A.H.

Harthama lost no time in attacking Rafi, and gaining the victory, besieged him in Samarcand; but it was several years before the rebellion was quelled. Meanwhile the Kharejites, taking advantage of the disturbances beyond the Oxus, rose the country to the south of that river, and threatened the eastern provinces of Persia. Things looked so serious that Harun resolved himself on a progress thither, and towards the end of 192 A.H. set out from his residence at Ricca for the purpose. Leaving Casim there to control Syria and the West, he journeyed to Bagdad, in charge of which he placed Amîn. He would also have left Mamun behind; but Mamun, dreading lest his Father, who had already sickened, should die by the way, in which event Amîn might, with the help of his royal Mother, depose him from the government of the East,—asked permission to join the army on the march, which after some demur Harun granted. Travelling slowly over the mountain range into Persia, Harun one day called his

Harthama's campaign against Rafi, 192–5 A.H.

Harún himself takes the field, 192 A.H. 808 A.D.

A.H. 169-193.

physician aside, and, alone under the shelter of a tree, unfolding a silken kerchief that girded his loins, disclosed the fatal disease he laboured under. "But have a care," he said, "that thou keep it secret; for my sons, (and he "named them all and their guardians), are watching the "hour of my decease, as thou mayest see by the shuffling "steed they will now mount me on, adding thus to mine "infirmity." There is something touching in these plaintive words of the great Monarch, now alone in the world, and bereft of the support even of those who were bound to rally round him in his hour of weakness. Early in the following year he reached Jorjan, where, becoming worse, he sent on Mamun with a portion of the army to Merve; and himself, journeying slowly, reached Tus, where, despairing of life, he had his grave dug close by his dwelling place. The brother of Rafi was brought in a prisoner when Harun was near his end; "If I had no more breath "left, he said, but to say a single word, it should be "*Slay him*"; and so the dismembered wretch was slain before the dying monarch. Shortly after, he breathed his last, and one of his younger sons prayed over the bier. He was forty-seven years of age, and had reigned three-and-twenty. When nineteen, he married Zobeida of royal birth, who survived him over thirty years. He had seven wives, but only four were alive at his death. Besides Amîn, the son of Zobeida, there were ten sons and fourteen daughters, all the progeny of slave-girls.

Harun takes the field.

Sickens on the way, ii. 193 A.H. End of 808 A.D.

Dies, vi. 193 A.H. March 809 A.D.

Though not mentioned by native chroniclers, Harun received an embassy from Charles the Great,—two Christians and a Jew, who sought that facilities might be afforded to the West for pilgrimage to the Holy land, and also for the fostering of trade. They returned with splendid gifts, elephants, rare ornaments, and a water clock; but the effort was followed by no material result. An embassy was also sent by Harun to the Chinese emperor, no doubt to establish friendly relations with his rulers on the trans-Oxus border; but neither is this mentioned by the Moslem annalists.[1]

Embassy to Harun from Charles the Great.

---

[1] The Chinese writers call the Caliph *Galun*.

A.H. 169-193.

Splendid reign.

Harun and his son Mamun, stand out in history as the greatest Abbasside monarchs. Harun might indeed have been ranked along with some of the best of the Omeyyad dynasty, had it not been for the dark spots of treacherous cruelty that stain his whole career.[1] Splendid in his courtly surroundings and princely in his liberality, he yet amassed vast treasures,—leaving 900 millions in his vault,—by oppressive and often unscrupulous means. His administration, with these exceptions, was just and prosperous. Accustomed from youth to martial life, he frequently joined his troops in the field; and his many victories, especially over the Greeks, have shed lustre on his reign. No Caliph, either before or after, displayed such energy and activity in his various progresses whether for pilgrimage, for administration, or for war. But what has chiefly made this Caliphate illustrious, is that it ushered in the era of letters. His Court was the centre to which, from all parts, flocked the wise and the learned, and at which rhetoric, poetry, history and law, as well as science, medicine, music, and the arts, met with a genial and princely reception,—all which bore ample fruit in the succeeding reigns.[2]

Even when shorn of its romance.

The witchery of Oriental romance has cast an adventitious glow around the life of Harun al Rashid; but even when that has faded away before the prosaic realities of history, enough remains to excite wonder and admiration at the splendour of this monarch's Caliphate.

---

[1] Weil is excessively severe on Harun,—a singular exception to his usual calm and impartial judgment. He makes him out the greatest tyrant of his race, though he really was not so bad as many others both before and after. It is the Barmecide tragedy that has given him so unenviable a pre-eminence in Eastern story.

[2] Savants of every branch were entertained with princely liberality; but Poets were the recipients of his special bounty. For example, Merwan having presented a sonnet in his praise, he forthwith gave him a purse of 5000 golden pieces, a robe of honour, ten Greek slave-girls, and one of his own steeds to ride on.

CHAPTER LXIV

AMÎN AT BAGDAD: MAMUN AT MERVE

193–198 A.H. 808–813 A.D.

Breach between Amîn and Mamun, 193 A.H. 808 A.D.

IN his unwise division of the kingdom, Harun left a fatal legacy that was not long in bearing bitter fruit. Amîn, as occupying Bagdad, the seat of empire, had the advantage of Mamun. In anticipation of his Father's end, he had deputed an agent to the camp at Tus, with letters to be kept hid until the event. Immediately on Harun's death, they were produced. In one, Mamun, then at Merve, was bidden to have oaths of allegiance sworn to both the brothers, in accordance with their Father's will. But a second, in direct contravention of that will, ordered the army with its munitions of war, to return at once to Bagdad. On hearing of this, Mamun sent messengers from Merve to expostulate against this violent breach of distinct conditions to which all had taken solemn oath; but the troops were already well on their way, hurrying too gladly homewards to heed the appeal. On their return to Bagdad, Amîn signalised his accession by distributing a year's pay to the army, which he had thus against his Father's covenant stolen away from Mamun.

Mamun's administration in the East.

The relations between the brothers were thus from the first strained. Mamun, guided by an able adviser, Fadhl ibn Sahl, temporised. This man, as a recent Persian convert and *protégé* of the Barmecides, was well fitted to secure a stable and popular rule throughout the East for Mamun, who was now its rightful Sovereign. Under his guidance all classes were conciliated, both the

A.H. 193–198.

Mamun Caliph of East, with Ibn Sahl Prime minister, 196 A.H. 811 A.D.

Arabs settled tribally in great numbers in and around Merve, and also the Turkish chiefs and princes, from whom a fourth of their tribute was now forgiven. Mamun's mother was of Persian blood, a fortunate relation that commended him to the affections of the people. "Son of "our sister," they said, "he is one of ourselves, and an "Abbasside to boot." As the breach with his brother widened, he assumed the title of Caliph, making Fadhl his Prime minister, both civil and military, whose rule ran from Hamadan to Thibet, from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf.[1] Meanwhile peace was restored throughout Khorasan. Harthama after a long siege took Samarcand, and Rafi, hearing of Mamun's benign administration, threw himself on his mercy and was pardoned.

Strained relations between Amîn and Mamun.

Amîn deposes Mamun, 194–5 A.H. 810 A.D.

His dissipated character.

Amîn on the other hand was a weak voluptuary led at will by those about him. His Vizier was another Fadhl, Ibn Rabia, who having been Chief minister with Harun at Tus, was party to what took place there upon his death. In consequence he dreaded the vengeance of Mamun should he ever come to power, and persuaded Amîn to proclaim that his Son's name should have precedence of Mamun's in the Public prayers. Mamun retaliated by dropping from the weekly Service all mention of Amîn, and by effectually closing every avenue of communication with Bagdad. At last Amîn took the fatal step of declaring his Brother altogether deposed from the succession, and his own son Heir-apparent. Of a piece with this high-handed act, he sent to the Kaaba for the two documents, solemnly suspended by his Father within the sacred walls, and tore them in shreds. Surrounded by eunuchs and women, he passed his time in revelry and dissipation. Songstresses and slave-girls, gathered for their beauty from all parts of the empire and arrayed in splendid jewelry, were the chief society of himself and his boon companions. For his *fêtes* on the Tigris he had five gondolas, in the shapes of lion, elephant, eagle, serpent, and horse. Besides the private

---

[1] He was called *Dzu Riasatein*, "Minister of the two departments," *i.e.* both civil and military.

A.H. 193-198.

Amîn's dissipation.

carousals in which he made no secret of drinking wine, his festivities were of the most sumptuous kind. For one of these he had the banquet-hall decked out with gorgeous carpets, couches and trappings; a hundred songstresses sang in unison before him, then breaking into companies of ten, and with palm-branches in their hands, each group advanced in turn and sang before him. But on this occasion his wayward fancy took the songs as of evil omen, and he had the hall dismantled and destroyed. Such revels, with music, dancing, and wine, were peculiarly obnoxious to Moslem sentiment; and our annalist (who seldom indulges in any such comment) remarks—"We "find of him no good thing to say." Still Amîn was a favourite at Bagdad, a city already demoralised by a long course of sensuous living; and he was popular there, partly because of the money which he lavished on the troops and populace, and partly also because, while Mamun was dreaded for his Persian proclivities, Amîn represented the Western sentiment that ruled in the Capital of Islam.

Amîn's generals beaten by Tâhir, who advances on Irac, 195 A.H. 811 A.D.

When Amîn found that his unjust pretensions were ignored at Merve, he resolved on reducing Mamun by force of arms; but from beginning to end he was unfortunate in his commanders. The first was Aly ibn Isa, hated in the East for his tyranny, and deposed, as we have seen, on that account with indignity by Harun. He was now despatched with 50,000 men, and met with no opposition till he reached Rei. There lay Tâhir, posted by Mamun with a small force to watch the frontier, who disdaining to wait for reinforcement, gave battle at once. Aly was slain in single combat by a blow from Tâhir's left hand, for he wielded arms equally well with both hands; and the Caliph's army fled.[1] This Tâhir, of

---

[1] He was called "the Ambidexter," and had also lost an eye, as we shall see noticed below. The command of Tâhir illustrates the change now rapidly coming over society in the relative position of the Arab tribes towards the conquered nations. He was the great-grandson of a Persian slave belonging to an Arab chief of the Khuzaite clan, and, as his freedman, became a "client" of the clan itself. The proud Arab, of the dominant caste, had now sunk in the scale, and the descendant of the slave, or "client," thus risen above him.

A.H. 193–198.

Tâhir's advance.

Persian descent, the wise and brave founder of the Tahiride house, was well chosen for the attack which Mamun now ordered on Bagdad. On his march to Holwan successive armies were sent by Amîn against him, but he defeated them all. Harthama, despatched with heavy reinforcements from Merve, was left in charge of Holwan by Tâhir, who now advanced upon Ahwaz and Sus, and from thence threatened the Capital itself.

Amîn's evil courses.

Fadhl ibn Rabia sought to rouse Amîn to a sense of the crisis, but the voluptuous monarch, immersed in pleasure, gave a readier ear to the auspicious presages of the creatures around him, and to the fond omens of his maidens and eunuchs. Chafing under repeated defeat, he confiscated the estate of Mamun, including the million of pieces given him by his father. Some even advised him to put Mamun's two sons left at Bagdad to death, but he had still the virtue left to frown at the proposal. Meanwhile a new danger threatened in Syria. Nasr a pretender, claiming in his person descent at once from the house of Aly and of Muavia,—sires that had contended for the Caliphate on the field of Siffin,—gained possession of Damascus and the surrounding country, and made such progress that he might indeed have founded a new Dynasty in the west, had not the miserable jealousies, between the Yemen and Modhar tribes, set up a rival against him. Troops were sent to quell the rebellion, but so long as misrule reigned at the Capital, nothing effectual could be done; and so for two or three years Syria was the scene of anarchy. One of the commanders of the Caliph's Syrian army was Hosein, the son of Aly ibn Isa slain by Tâhir,—an ill-conditioned man who alienated the Syrian troops by his partiality for the men of Khorasan. This Officer suddenly returned with his army to Bagdad. Summoned on his arrival at midnight by Amîn, he sent back the insolent reply that being neither jester nor musician, it was not his wont to appear by night, but that he would do so in the morning. His object, however, was to dethrone Amîn. By daylight he had raised the malcontents of the City, whose only safety lay in anticipating the certain victory of

Rebellion in Syria, end of 195 A.H.

Hosein, a Syrian Officer, deposes Amîn, 196 A.H. 812 A.D.

Syrian Officer deposes Amîn.

Mamun. Hosein then crossed the river, and dispersing the Caliph's guards, seized both him and his mother[1] and imprisoned them in one of the palaces. He then proclaimed Mamun as Caliph. But at heart Bagdad hated the Khorasanies. Hosein had moreover no money wherewith to gain over either the mob or the soldiery; and the leading men dreaded the advent of Mamun. And so it came to pass that in a few days a counter-force was mustered against Hosein, who was taken prisoner and brought before Amîn, now reinstated in the Caliphate. The weak monarch not only pardoned Hosein, but gave him a new command to proceed to Holwan against Mamun. But as he crossed the bridge, the people following hooted at him, and he fled. He was pursued by order of the Caliph, overtaken a short way from the city, and slain. Ibn Rabia, the Vizier, who had assisted Hosein in this singular outbreak, retired from the Court and went into close hiding.

But is taken prisoner,

And slain.

Advance of Tâhir, 196 A.H. 812 A.D.

Meanwhile Tâhir was steadily advancing. Column after column was despatched against him by Amîn; but they had little power to stay the tide of conquest. The provinces east of the Tigris had already sent in their adhesion to Tâhir at Ahwaz; and now all Arabia, with the Holy cities, came over and swore allegiance to Mamun. The governor of Mecca, a descendant of the house of Aly, denounced in public the iniquity and sacrilege of Amîn in destroying the documents suspended in the Kaaba; then proceeding to Merve, he was honourably received by Mamun, always favourable to that house, and sent back with splendid gifts. At last Tâhir crossed the Tigris by Medain, almost within sight of Bagdad, and captured Wasit. Kufa, seeing no alternative, now accepted Mamun; and Mesopotamia from Bussorah to Mosul followed suit. The wretched Capital alone remained. Amîn sought to bribe his followers to fight, and those of the enemy to desert, by money cast lavishly amongst them. But all in vain. Before the close of the year Tâhir, ready to bom-

Tâhir and Harthama before Bagdad, xii. 196 A.H. August 812 A.D.

---

[1] Zobeida, who had left Ricca on Abu Jafar's death, was met (193 A.H.) by Amîn and his chief men at Anbar, and conducted in state to Bagdad.

A.H. 193–198.

bard the city, planted his camp before the Anbar gate. Harthama, similarly approaching from the east, sat down outside the quarter on the other bank of the river.

Siege and sufferings of Bagdad, 197 A.H. 812–13 A.D.

The sufferings of Bagdad throughout the siege, which lasted for a whole year, were terrible beyond description. The struggle was prolonged not only by the advantage the Capital had in lying on either bank of the river with all its means of transport, but also by the canals which intersected and protected it. The prisons were broken, and there was riot day and night. Catapults planted all round the walls cast shot into the City; while streams of Greek fire directed from within against the engines of war, caused great loss of life without. Hand-to-hand fighting went on in every street, and as the citizens threw down stones and missives on the advancing soldiers, Tâhir had to raze to the ground whole quarters for his own protection. The distress of the inhabitants thus hemmed in, and cut off from all supplies of food, was frightful; and the suffering of the women and children, heartrending, —described by the poets of the day as drawing "tears of blood" from those who witnessed them. Palaces costing millions were left in ashes; and the beautiful City into which the riches of the world had for fifty years been pouring, became a heap of ruins.

Distress at Bagdad.

As one quarter after another fell into the hands of Tâhir, the generals of Amîn began to drop off into his camp. In vain Amîn emptied his treasury, and when that failed melted vessels of gold and silver to gain men for his defence. The populace held by him; but most of those who had anything still to save went over to the invading force. Things had gone on thus throughout the year 197 A.H., and the wretched City was now reduced to the last extremity of distress and want, when Tâhir, supported now by most of Amîn's own generals, resolved on the final storm. In concert with these, and with Harthama, who had in Tâhir's view been too long inactive on the eastern side, the bridges were cut away and the City carried on every side at the point of the sword. Amîn, finding his palace untenable, fled with his Mother and

City stormed, 198 A.H. Sept. 813 A.D.

A.H. 193–198.

children into the strong citadel which Mansur had built for himself on the brink of the river; while the inmates of his Harem, crowds of eunuchs and damsels, fled hither and thither in terror for their lives. The citadel was defended by a faithful few, who planted engines at the gates to keep off attack; and here, under shelter of its battlements, Amîn prolonged for two or three days his miserable life.

Amîn takes refuge in citadel.

His uncle Ibrahim, one of the few nobles who still held by him, tells us that, about this time, to relieve the sultry closeness of an autumn evening, Amîn issued from the Palace to breathe the fresh air of the river bank, and sent to call him thither. "I went, and as we sat in a balcony over-"looking the swift stream, Amîn said, 'How balmy the "'river air; how calm and clear the moonbeams playing "'on the water!'[1] Then he said, 'Have ye here any "'wine?' which when they brought we both drank of it; "and after that I sang to him one or two of the songs he "liked. When I had done, he called for the chief Song-"stress and bade her sing to him. She began with a "well-known ode on a pack of bloodhounds. Starting at "the words, he bade her sing something else; and so she "warbled a tearful sonnet on loved ones far away. 'Out "'upon thee!' he cried: 'hast thou nothing else?' 'That "'song thou used to love,' she said, as she began a third "about the fate of monarchies. 'Begone!' cried the "Caliph, swearing angrily at her, 'and let me see thy face "'no more!' The startled damsel, as she hasted away in "the dim moonlight, stumbled on a priceless crystal goblet "set before Amîn, and it broke in pieces. 'See!' he cried "again; 'all are against me, and the end is near. Hark! "'didst thou hear that voice, as if a solemn verse of the "'Coran, from across the river?' We listened; it was "but the strained imagination: all was still, and we retired "into the citadel."

Evening scene on river bank.

But two courses were now open to Amîn;—either to surrender, or issuing forth by night, make a bold dash for

Amîn's attempted flight.

---

[1] It was the third week of the first month of the year 198 A.H., when the moon would be bright in the evening, as Ibrahim tells us.

A.H. 193-198.

Amîn surrenders.

Syria. He chose the latter; for there were yet horses enough in the royal stables, and faithful men to mount them as his bodyguard. But Tâhir, learning the design, threatened the chief men still waiting on Amîn, that if they did not force him to surrender, he would visit them with condign punishment. The timid monarch was easily persuaded to exchange the risks of flight for the prospect of ease and pleasure in banishment. But he resolutely refused to resign himself into the hands of Tâhir, whom as a Persian he stood in dread of; it was only Harthama who promised to be his friend, that he would surrender to. Tâhir objected, for this would have implied that Harthama and not Tâhir was the conqueror of Bagdad. At last it was arranged that while Amîn gave himself up to Harthama, the Sceptre, signet, and royal robes should be given to Tâhir; and so Harthama prepared at once to convey the fallen monarch to his camp across the river. Tâhir, however, fearing collusion in reference to the compromise, posted men all round the Citadel; and Harthama hearing of it bade Amîn wait till he could protect him on the following day. But the unfortunate Monarch could remain no longer in his lonely palace. Deserted by his followers, he had not even water to quench his thirst; and he resolved to leave at once. So embracing his two sons, and wiping the fast-falling tears away with his cloak, he rode down to the river bank, where Harthama waited in a skiff to carry him across. As he embarked, Harthama kissing his hands embraced him, and quickly bade them to put off; but they had hardly left the shore, when Tâhir's people attacked the boat with stones and arrows. It sank; Harthama was barely saved, the boatmen seizing him by the hair of his head. Amîn casting off his clothes, swam to the shore. Naked and shivering with fright, he was carried to a house, where the following night he was slain by a party of Persian soldiers. His head, after being exposed by Tâhir on the battlements, was sent, together with the emblems of royalty, to Mamun.

His death, 24 i. 198 A.H. Sept. 813 A.D.

The troops and people of Bagdad repented now that

A.H. 193–198.

An inglorious reign.

they had not fought more bravely for Amîn; but that, says our annalist, was because of the treasure he used to lavish on them. Indeed there was little more that could be said to favour him. His troubled and inglorious reign lasted four years and eight months.

CHAPTER LXV

MAMUN

198–218 A.H. 813–833 A.D.

Mamun persuaded by Fadhl to stay at Merve, 198 A.H. 813 A.D.

MAMUN had no affinity to the debauchee. We nowhere read of any revelries like his brother's, nor indulgences at variance with the teaching of Islam. On the contrary, his life was commendable, and his reign, if we except certain flagrant cruelties, not only illustrious, but just. Singularly susceptible to influences about him, and loving the east as much as he disliked the west, Mamun now made the fatal mistake of holding on at Merve, where he fell blindly under the mastery of Fadhl his Vizier, and embraced the dogmas of the Alyite persuasion,—dogmas not only hateful at the Capital, but dangerous to the stability of his throne. Hence trouble in prospect for Bagdad, and for the Empire at large.

Tâhir supplanted by Hasan, brother of Fadhl.

Not long after Bagdad had been taken, the local troops and populace rose upon Tâhir for the murder of their favourite Caliph, and the banishment of Zobeida with his two sons to Mosul; but after a few days, pacified by gifts, they returned to order. Tâhir continued at the head of affairs, till Mamun sent Hasan ibn Sahl, at the instance of his brother Fadhl, as Viceroy to supersede him;—a doubly unfortunate step,—alienating as it did Tâhir, and arousing antagonism throughout the older Provinces which feared the floodtide of Persian interest.

Rebellion of Nasr in Asia Minor.

First, Nasr, an Arab chieftain, faithful to the memory of the late Caliph, took up arms to avenge his fall, and, followed by a host of Arabs, seized on the country between

A.H. 198-218.

Aleppo and Someisat. Tâhir, sent to oppose him, but sick at the course events were taking, entered without heart on the contest, and, after some unsuccessful battles, retired. Thus Nasr for many years dominated the border-lands of Asia Minor, while Tâhir, in charge of Syria and Mesopotamia, remained spiritless and inactive at Ricca.

Rebellion of Abu Saraya at Kufa and Bussorah, 199 A.H. 814 A.D.

In the following year a more dangerous rebellion was headed by Abu Saraya, a notable adventurer, who, beginning as brigand, soon raised a great following, and having gained possession of Kufa, there set up as its ruler a descendant of Aly. The fickle City, ready at any moment to rise in favour of the house of Aly, and, like others, displeased at the Caliph falling under Persian influence, went entirely over to Abu Saraya, who also gained possession of Bussorah and great part of Irac, beating back army after army, sent against him from Bagdad. He even coined money in the name of his Alyite *protégé*, and sent envoys of the same stock throughout Arabia and elsewhere. At last, Bagdad itself was threatened, and the Viceroy in alarm sent for Harthama, who, vexed like Tâhir with the state of affairs, had retired into seclusion. Harthama soon changed the scene, drove Abu Saraya back into Kufa, and besieged him there. The Kufans, tired of the Pretender and his marauding followers, gave them no further countenance, and so Abu Saraya effected his escape with 800 horse. Pursued over the Tigris, he was taken prisoner before Hasan the Viceroy, who sent his head to Mamun, and had the body impaled over the bridge at Bagdad. His career was thus, after ten months, cut short; but it was some time before Bussorah and Arabia settled down. The Alyite governors of Abu Saraya committed great atrocities in various quarters,—to such an extent indeed that one earned the name of "the Butcher," and another that of "the Burner." At Mecca, his upstart envoy attempted to head the Pilgrimage, and the ceremonies ended in great disorder. The golden linings of the Kaaba and its treasury were plundered, and the brocaded covering torn down and divided amongst

Defeated by Harthama and slain, 200 A.H. 815 A.D.

Pilgrimage, Dzul Hijj, 199 A.H.

A.H. 198–218.

the insurgents.[1] A rival Caliph was even set up, who continued to rule there for a time, but eventually submitted himself to Mamun and was pardoned.

Harthama's journey to Merve, 200 A.H.

Harthama having subdued this rebellion returned to Nehrwan without visiting the Viceroy. There he received orders from the Caliph to take up the government of Syria and Arabia. But he resolved first to go direct to Merve, and there warn Mamun of the critical state of things which his Vizier was hiding from him, and that the West would speedily slip from his grasp, unless he made an early return to Bagdad. But Fadhl, anticipating Harthama's errand, poisoned his Master's mind against him. It was near the end of the year before he reached Merve which, fearing lest the Vizier should conceal his errand, he entered with martial music. Apprised thus of his arrival, the offended Caliph summoned him at once to his presence, and covered him with reproaches for not more speedily and effectively suppressing the rebellion of Abu Saraya. As the loyal General opened his lips to make explanation and deliver his warning, the bodyguard rushed upon him, fiercely buffeted him on face and body, and hurried him off to prison, where he shortly died of his injuries, or (as popularly believed) was put to death by Fadhl. So perished, the victim of cruel ingratitude, this great captain who had fought for the empire from Africa to Khorasan, and to whom in great part Mamun owed success over his faithless Brother.

Received angrily by Mamun, xi. 200 A.H. June 816 A.D.

His death.

Rising at Bagdad, 200 A.H.

The fate of Harthama, a favourite in the West, caused fresh excitement in Bagdad. The troops rose against Hasan, and abused him as the tool of his brother Fadhl, —"the Magian and son of a Magian." After three days' fighting, Hasan driven from the City, took refuge in Medain, and eventually retired to Wasit. Continual encounters ensued for many months, but without material result. Meanwhile confusion prevailed at Bagdad; and the unfortunate City was for a time at the mercy of bands of robbers, which committed all kinds of plunder and

Hasan flies to Wasit. Beginning of 201 A.H.

---

[1] Al Kindy, the contemporary Christian apologist, tells us that Othman's exemplar of the Coran, deposited in the Kaaba, was burned in the conflagration which he says took place at this time. *Apology*, S.P.C.K., p. 75.

excess. But the better class of Citizens at last banded themselves together, and outnumbering the rabble, held them in check; while two chief men, respected for their wisdom and probity, were placed at the head of affairs. Mansur, son of the Caliph Mehdy, was offered the throne. He declined, but agreed to conduct the government in the name of Mamun. Towards the close of the year, weary of the struggle, the leaders at Bagdad came to terms with Hasan, the Viceroy, who published an amnesty, promising six months' pay to the troops, and the people their allowances according to their stipendiary roll. Things were settling down on this footing, when the Capital was again thrown into confusion, by an act of inconceivable infatuation on the part of Mamun.

Peace restored to Bagdad, x. 201 A.H.

This was no less than the adoption by the Caliph of Aly, surnamed *Ridha* ("the well pleasing"[1]), a descendant of Aly, who was summoned to Merve and, though twenty-two years older than the Caliph himself, proclaimed Heir-apparent. The Vizier, no doubt, persuaded his subservient Master that this was the likeliest means of putting an end to the Alyite insurrection in the West. At an earlier period, a coalition between the houses of Aly and Abbas might possibly have been successful. It was now an idle dream; and at the present moment, when the two factions were arrayed against each other in strife implacable, the act was one of suicidal folly. Thus the edict went forth throughout the Empire that allegiance was to be sworn to Aly-ridha as next in succession to the Throne; and the more publicly to mark this new departure, the national dress was changed from Abbasside black to Shie-ite green. Towards the end of the year, Hasan received from his brother command to proclaim and carry out this order, which fell like a thunderbolt upon the Capital. The Shie-ites were feared and hated there, and the Abbassides at court felt the blow as aimed at the very existence of their Dynasty. All rose in rebellion, ready to depose Mamun as Caliph and choose another in his stead. Mansur no longer opposed

Mamun proclaims Aly-ridha Heir-apparent, ix. 201 A.H. 817 A.D.

Bagdad revolts.

---

[1] That is, "the one chosen as such from amongst the Prophet's descendants." *Ibn Athir.*

A.H. 198–218.

Ibrahim proclaimed Caliph, 1.i.202 A.H. July 817 A.D.

the measure; and so on the last Friday of the year, instead of prayer for Mamun as reigning sovereign, Ibrahim, brother of Mansur, was saluted Caliph; and shortly after the oath of fealty taken in his name. It is the same Ibrahim whom we have already met in the moonlight scene by the Tigris. He was the son of Mehdy by an African slave-girl; proficient in music, song, and poetry, he altogether lacked strength for the difficult position which he now assumed, and which with difficulty he held for two years.

Bagdad and Irac in rebellion, 202–3 A.H.

Hasan, Mamun's viceroy, was obliged on this again to retire to Wasit, and fighting was renewed between the Imperial troops and those of the Usurper. Hasan, thinking to gain over Kufa with its Shie-ite proclivities, appointed as its governor a brother of Aly-ridha; and it is significant of the caprice of that fickle city, and the hopelessness of the new coalition, that, while ready to receive him as a purely Alyite leader, they would hear nothing of him as the Persian representative of Mamun; and so fighting went on there as elsewhere. While the West was in this state of turmoil, a fresh and startling change took place at Merve.

Mamun's eyes opened, 202 A.H. 817–18 A.D.

Mamun's eyes at last were opened. The first to tell him the truth, strange to say, was Aly-ridha himself. Things had gone on from bad to worse since his adoption the year before. He ventured now to warn the Caliph that his Vizier was hiding from him the truth; that the people of Irac held him to be either half-witted or bewitched; and that between Ibrahim and the Alyites the empire was slipping from his hands;—Hasan, the Vizier's brother, was hurrying the West to ruin, while Tâhir, who might have righted the vessel in the storm, was thrust neglected into Syria. A body of leading men, guaranteed against the resentment of the Vizier, confirmed the facts, and advised Mamun's return at once to Bagdad, as the only safety for the Empire. This, they added, was the loyal errand of Harthama, had his Master but listened to him two years before. Mamun, now convinced that the insurrection was due to his own subservience to Fadhl and his Shie-ite teaching, gave orders for his Court to march towards the Capital. Arrived at Sarrakhs, Fadhl, who had vented his displeasure against the informers, was found murdered in his bath. A reward was offered for the assassins; but these asserted that they had done what they did by command of the Caliph. They were executed nevertheless, and their heads sent to Hasan with a letter of condolence on the death of his brother, and the promise that he should succeed to the vacant office. Mamun further showed his attachment to Hasan by contracting a marriage with his daughter Burân, a child then of ten years of age; but the bridal ceremony did not take place for another eight years. About the same time, he gave one of his own daughters in marriage to Aly-ridha, who was now fifty-four years of age, and a second to Aly-ridha's son, thus to all outward appearance cementing his alliance with him. A brother of Aly-ridha was also nominated to the high office of presiding at the annual Pilgrimage.

Sets out for Bagdad, viii. 202 A.H. Feb. 818 A.D.

Murder of Fadhl, March ix. 202 A.H.

Death of Aly-ridha ii. 203 A.H. August 818 A.D.

Shortly after this another unexpected event took place. In his progress westward, Mamun rested in the autumn for a while at Tus. There Aly-ridha died suddenly of a surfeit of grapes, and Mamun buried him by the side of his father. The world was startled by this death, following so rapidly on that of Fadhl; and the report went forth that the grapes had been poisoned by Mamun. Our annalist (it may be for decency's sake) says he does not believe it; and, indeed, the favour shown to the deceased, and the marriages just mentioned, make against the dark impeachment. On the other hand, Aly and Fadhl were the two insuperable obstacles in Mamun's way, and by their disappearance the Gordian knot was solved. And so, while in a letter to Hasan he lamented the death of Aly, the Caliph at the same time wrote to the citizens of Bagdad saying that as Aly against whose accession they had been so bitter was gone, nothing was now left against returning to their loyalty. Though this advance met with but an unceremonious answer, the cause of Mamun began to be canvassed there with some success. Meanwhile, Ibrahim, by

A.H. 198–218.

Flight of Ibrahim, xii. 203 A.H. May 819 A.D.

his weak and harsh administration, was alienating even the few friends remaining. His troops made no head against the Caliph's; and Medain, where he had been holding his court, fell into their hands. During the winter months, things went from bad to worse with him; and as the captains of Mamun closed in upon the Capital, the chief men, one after another, went over to them. At last, about the end of the year, these gained possession of the city. Ibrahim escaped into hiding, after an ignoble reign of close on two years. For eight years he was lost sight of, but was at last apprehended by the police, walking abroad at an untimely hour of the night in female disguise. He offered his costly ring as a bribe, but that only revealed his birth; and he was carried an object of ridicule in woman's attire to the court of the Caliph. "Bravo!" cried Mamun; "is it thou, Ibrahim?" He appealed for mercy; and it was granted, for it was the time of the bridal ceremony with Burân, and she made intercession for him. Ibrahim celebrated the royal clemency in a poem which is much admired. On its being recited before him, Mamun was greatly pleased, and exclaimed in the words of Joseph to his brethren;—"There shall be no "reproach on you this day; the Lord, most merciful, pardon you!"

Mamun enters Bagdad, ii. 204 A.H. August 819 A.D.

While the Capital was being recalled to its allegiance, Mamun advanced slowly, halting as he journeyed to secure complete restoration of order before his entry. At Jorjan he remained a month, and a week at Nehrwan, whither the members of the Royal house, captains, and chiefs of State came out to bid him welcome; and Tâhir also, by invitation, from Ricca. So advancing, he entered Bagdad early in 204 A.H. The edict still held for green, and so the people at the first dressed accordingly. Mamun, however, having invited his Court to make known their requests, the first favour preferred by Tâhir was that black might be reverted to. The Caliph graciously acceded, and bestowed dresses of honour in that colour upon his Courtiers. Indeed, the advent of Mamun, after the long rebellion, was conspicuous for the absence of a single retaliatory measure.

A.H. 198–218.

Fadhl ibn Rabia, in hiding ever since Amîn's death, and Isa, Vizier of Ibrahim, who had both thrown all their influence into the opposite cause, were now re-admitted to favour. The whole attitude of Mamun was, on this occasion, generous and forgiving.

Tâhir viceroy in East, 204–5 A.H.

Tâhir was appointed governor of Bagdad, and his son Abdallah, equally distinguished, left to succeed him at Ricca. But whether suspicious of Tâhir's ambitious aims, or (as is also said) his presence reminding him of his Brother's sad death, Mamun now conceived an aversion to him. Tâhir, aware of it, prevailed on the Vizier to propose him for the Viceroyalty of the east, where a strong hand was needed. Why, if suspicious of his fidelity, Mamun consented to appoint him to so great a charge, is not clear. We are told that a confidential eunuch accompanied him with secret orders to administer poison if ever he should swerve from loyalty. After ruling successfully for two years, Tâhir, as had been feared, showed signs of insubordination. At the weekly Service, he dropped the Caliph's name from its place in the accustomed prayer, substituting for it some vague petition for guidance. The Master of the post (an office everywhere charged with such duty) immediately reported the alarming incident to the Court; and the next day's despatch, awaited with anxiety by Mamun, brought the expected tidings of Tâhir being found dead in his bed. The circumstances of his Viceroyalty are singular and obscure, and his opportune decease justifies the suspicion of foul dealing. Still more singular, the name of Tâhir remained so great, that, imputation of disloyalty notwithstanding, the Viceroyalty of the east was continued in his family.

His death, 207 A.H. 822 A.D.

Tâhir's character.

Tâhir is famous not only as a soldier and a ruler, but also as a generous patron of learning and poetry. A letter addressed to his son on being appointed to Mesopotamia, in which are embodied instructions on all the duties of life, social and political, is justly regarded a model, not only of perfect writing, but of culture and precept. As such the Caliph so greatly admired it, that he had copies multiplied and spread all over the empire. Tâhir, we have seen, Tahiride family hold government of Khorasan.

was called from his dexterity in the field, "He of the two right hands"; he had also but one eye, so that a hostile poet said of him:—"O thou Ambidexter, thou hast an eye too "little and a hand too much," signifying that he was a brigand who should lose a hand.[1] His eldest son, Abdallah, being engaged in the west, Mamun appointed his brother Talha to succeed. At the same time he sent his Vizier to see to the establishment of a loyal and efficient administration. The Vizier so deputed crossed the Oxus and waged a successful campaign in Central Asia. On leaving, he received from Talha a purse of three million pieces, and his secretary 500,000; such was the lavish fashion of the day.

End of Nasr's rebellion, 210 A.H.

Nasr the Alyite was, up to this time, still in rebellion on the Western frontier. Tâhir, when in Syria, had of purpose carried on operations languidly against him. But Abdallah, on succeeding his father, attacked him more vigorously, and drove him into an impregnable fortress on the borders of Asia Minor, from whence, after a five years' siege, he was induced to submit himself to the Caliph; and his return to Bagdad as a loyal subject was celebrated with great rejoicings. But a party of malcontents, who had been in hiding with Ibrahim ever since his deposition, now sought to create a diversion against Mamun by sundering the bridge of boats as the procession carrying Nasr approached. Headed by Ibn Ayesha, a relative of the Royal house, they were seized and treated with singular cruelty by Mamun, who had the leader exposed in the Palace court under a burning sun for three days, then scourged, and with several of his companions put to death. His body was impaled in public, the first instance of one of Royal blood being so treated. The Caliph may have had reason for the execution of these conspirators; but it was rare for him to resort to such inhuman practices. Ibrahim himself was also arrested about this time, but, as we have seen, freely pardoned.

Cruel treatment of rebels.

In the same year Burân, now eighteen years of age, was married to Mamun. Her father Hasan celebrated the occasion with a magnificence truly Oriental, at his country residence near to Wasit. Thither flocked the Court and its surroundings in great splendour; Zobeida too, and the grandfather of the bride, who on the marriage night showered a heap of pearls upon the bridegroom; which, gathered up by his command to the number of 1000, were bestowed upon Burân. Invited to ask for any special favours, she obtained grace for Ibrahim, and leave for Zobeida to go on pilgrimage. The bridal chamber was lighted with candles of costly ambergris, and Zobeida arrayed the bride in a robe of priceless pearls. Mamun spent a fortnight in this brilliant company, and Hasan, to mark his gratitude for the royal favour, spent fabulous sums in presents to all around.[1] Balls of musk were cast amongst the crowd who rushed about to catch them. In each was the name of an estate, slave-girl, steed, or other prize, which fell to the lot of him who caught it. Dresses of honour were conferred on all, and so this festival, unparalleled in its magnificence, came to an end. To make amends for all that he had spent, the Caliph placed the revenues of certain provinces at Hasan's disposal for a year. Such were the vast fortunes that fell in these days to the lot of men in power. Burân survived her husband over fifty years.

---

[1] The penalty in the Coran for robbery. His letter is given at length by Ibn Athir,—occupying eleven pages of the printed edition.

Mamun's marriage to Burân, ix. 210 A.H. Jan. 826 A.D.

Egypt had been long the scene of chronic revolt, aggravated by the inroad of Spanish refugees who joined the insurgents and for several years held Alexandria. Abdallah, to whose charge it belonged, while engaged with Nasr in the north, was unable to turn his arms in that direction. He now attacked the rebels and suppressed the insurrection. The Spaniards took ship for Crete, which now fell into the hands of the Moslems. About this time also Sicily fell under the Aghlabite arms, which further ravaged lower Italy, and as a maritime power dominated the shores of the Mediterranean all around. But with these western lands the Caliphate now had small concern.

Insurrection in Egypt, 200–210 A.H.

Put down, 212 A.H.

---

[1] Tradition speaks of sums amounting to a million sterling.

A.H. 198–218.

Babek's rebellion, 201 A.H. 816 A.D.

Abdallah having reduced Egypt was now employed against the brigand Babek. This famous freebooter arose in the beginning of the century, and was for twenty years the terror of the northern provinces of the Caliphate. He professed strange doctrines, as transmigration, incestuous marriage,[1] and other tenets of the Eastern mystics. He was followed by multitudes, and held the difficult country towards Azerbijan. One after another he routed the Imperial forces, which sometimes were cut entirely to pieces in the mountain passes through which they sought to pursue the enemy. Abdallah now sent to the attack, had hardly the opportunity of crossing arms with him; for an outbreak occurring just then at Nisabur, he was called away to Khorasan, where he remained as Viceroy. The Moslem army being also now engaged with Greece, Babek was left for a time alone.

Unsuccessfully attacked, 214 A.H.

Asia Minor, i. 215 A.H. March 830 A.D.

What made Mamun, in the later years of his reign, take the field in person, which he had never done before, is nowhere explained; nor why a new war was now waged with the Greeks. The reason may have been that they had made common cause with Babek on the confines of Armenia. However that may be, early in the year 215 A.H., Mamun set out from Tarsus, and from thence led a successful campaign against the Emperor Theophilus. On the way he received Mohammed, son of Aly-ridha, gave him in marriage the daughter to whom he had been affianced thirteen years before, and accorded them leave to settle at Medina. There followed in the two succeeding years a second and a third invasion of Asia Minor, and likewise an expedition to Egypt, which was again disturbed;—all three campaigns commanded in person by Mamun.

Further campaigns there, 216–217 A.H.

Mamun commences foundation of Tyana citadel.

At the close of his life, Mamun was still in the vicinity of Tarsus, returning from his last campaign against the Greeks. To hold them the better in check, he had begun the foundations of a grand military settlement at Tyana, 70 miles north of Tarsus. The plan was laid out by

---

[1] Hence called from a Persian term Khurramies, or Voluptuaries. He is mentioned by Al Kindy as the scourge of the empire. *Apology*, p. 46.

Mamun himself. The walls, three leagues in circumference, were pierced by four gates, each to be guarded by a strong fortress. Artificers were gathered from all quarters of the empire; and the Caliph, on returning, left his son Abbas to carry on the work. This martial ardour, emulating even that of Harun, and coming, as it did, at the close of an otherwise pacific life, is a remarkable trait in the changeful character of Mamun.

Tyana citadel.

On these expeditions he repeatedly visited Damascus, and gave princely donations to the chief families residing there, and also to the Syrian poets who sang his praises, for he was bountiful even to extravagance. But he had no love for the people of Syria; and when asked to regard them with the favour wherewith he regarded the Persians, he was not slow in recounting their misdeeds and disloyalty towards his Dynasty. At the Great Mosque of Damascus he was shown a rescript from the Prophet with his seal, which he pressed to his eyes in reverence, and shed tears upon.

Mamun visits Damascus.

In point of fact, Mamun never shook off the prejudices acquired in Persia, nor with them his Alyite proclivities. In the later years of his reign there was evolved from these a remarkable (though by no means rare) combination of free-thought and intolerance. In some matters indeed the liberality of Mamun was singularly wide. Thus a few years previously, he abolished the ban imposed by his predecessors on the favourable mention of Muavia or any of the Omeyyad "Companions"; and even to Christians liberty of discussion on the comparative claims of the Gospel and Islam was allowed.[1] But the Persian predilections which he all the time entertained, inclined him at last zealously to canvass the doctrines of the free-thinking Motazelites. He surrounded himself at the same time with theologians and divines of all the schools, and had discussions in his presence on such abstract doctrines as Man's relation to the Deity, and the nature of the Godhead itself. In the end he avowed his conversion to certain

Mamun's Persian proclivities, 211 A.H. 826 A.D.

---

[1] *E.g.* the *Apology of Kindy* could only have been possible under a Motazelite court like Mamun's.

A.H. 198-218.

Heterodox views on Coran, Freewill, etc., 212 A.H.

tenets opposed to the Orthodox faith. Amongst these he held Freedom of the Will in place of Predestination; and that the Coran, though inspired, was "created," in place of the hitherto undisputed tenet that it is "uncreate and eternal." He also declared his belief that, after the Prophet, Aly was the chiefest of mankind; on which dogma is also built up the divine Imamate, or spiritual leadership vested from time to time in some member of the house of Aly. Hence also it began to be taught that, apart from the Coran and tradition, there might be other infallible sources of divine guidance. The Coran itself was explained allegorically, and difficulties besetting the Orthodox, such as offended reason or cramped the growth of society, thus easily evaded.[1] With advancing years the conviction of Mamun in respect of the Coran being an emanation in time, led to the unfortunate resolve to impose this view by pains and penalties, on his subjects.[2] When on his last campaign in Asia Minor, he sent a mandate to the governor of Bagdad to summon the leading Doctors, and having tested them on that vital doctrine, to report their answers to him. At this inquisition, held repeatedly, most quailed under the process and confessed. Some stood firm, among whom was Ahmed ibn Hanbal (founder of the Hanbalite school), who was ordered in chains to the Caliph's camp. We are told of threats, even of death, against two of these; and twenty others who refused to confess were sent under escort to await at Tarsus the return of the Caliph from the wars; but on the way tidings were received of his death. Such

Enforces his views with intolerance and cruelty, 218 A.H. 833 A.D.

---

[1] It was easy thus to justify, for example, the use of wine and temporary marriage (Muta). The latter, by which conjugal contract can be entered into for a limited period, is still a tenet of the Shiyas; but is justly reprobated by the Orthodox. As regards wine, though we nowhere hear of Mamun's being given to its indulgence, it certainly was handed round in golden beakers at his marriage with Burân; and other occasions are mentioned by Weil.

[2] One of his arguments was this syllogism; God created all things; the Coran is a thing: therefore the Coran is created. Also such passages as (*Suras* xxi. v. 2 and xli. v. 2) "We have *made* or ordained for thee the Coran in the Arabic tongue," etc. "Yes," replied the defendant, "it may have been 'made' or ordained, but not created."

A.H. 198–218.

cruel intolerance dims the lustre of Mamun's later years.[1]

Development of science and literature.

For his reign was without question a glorious one, ushering in, as it did, the palmy days of literature, science, and philosophy. He was himself addicted to poetry, and once struck a poet with amazement who, on reciting an original piece of a hundred stanzas, found the Caliph readily "capping" every verse as he went along. At his Court were munificently entertained men of science and letters, poets, physicians and philosophers. Besides philologists and grammarians, it was the age also of the collectors of tradition, such as the great Bokhari, and of historians, as Wackidi,[2] to whom we owe the most trustworthy biography of the Prophet; and of Doctors of the law, as Shafie and Ibn Hanbal.[3] Moreover Jews and Christians were welcome at the Court not only for their own learning, but as versed both in the Arabic tongue and in the language and literature of Greece. The Monasteries of Syria, Asia Minor, and the Levant, were ransacked for manuscripts of the Greek philosophers, historians, and geometricians. These, with vast labour and erudition, were translated into Arabic; and thus the learning of the West was made accessible to the Moslem world. Nor were their efforts confined to the reproduc-

---

[1] Curiously enough, in a later passage under the reign of the Orthodox Motawakkil, Ibn al Athir traces the Motazelite doctrines by tradition to Labid the Jew, who bewitched Mahomet, taught that the Old Testament was created, and spread the Zendic creed. It is more likely to have been an offshoot of the Buddhist and Zoroastrian teaching of India and Central Asia.

[2] Mohammed Ibn Omar died 207 A.H.: and his Secretary, who wrote from his master the famous biography, was one of those had up before the Inquisition just mentioned on the question of the Coran.

[3] Founders of two out of the four great schools of law. The other two were Abu Hanifa (*d.* 150) and Malik (*d.* 178), the former followed by the Turks, the latter by the Africans. The Shafieite school prevails in the East, and the Hanbalite in Arabia. There is no material divergence in doctrine between the four,—mainly matters of ritual. For example, the Hanifites are taught to say *Amen* softly, and forbidden in adoration to raise the hands to the ears, to pray with the legs apart, or to fold their hands across the breast. Our Indian fellow-subjects are much exercised on these trivial points. See judgment of the Privy Council, reported in *The Times*, February 23, 1891.

A.H. 198-218.

Science and literature.

tion of ancient works; in some directions they extended also to original research. An Observatory, reared on the plain of Tadmor, furnished materials for the successful study of astronomy and geometry. In other walks of literature, we have books of Travel and History, and, above all, of Medicine; while much attention was paid to the less practical, but more popular, branches of astrology and alchemy. It was through the labours of these learned men that the nations of Europe, then shrouded in the darkness of the Middle Ages, became again acquainted with their own proper but forgotten patrimony of Grecian science and philosophy.

Mamun's reign brilliant and just;

Mamun was undoubtedly upon the whole a ruler at once just and mild. Repeated change in views and sentiment, both political and religious, was due partly to Persian training and affinity, partly to a yielding nature which made him unduly subject, as in the case of Fadhl, to personal influence. He cannot be acquitted of acts of capricious violence, some of which are just as cruel as those which stain the memory of his predecessors. One instance of singular inhumanity I should not omit. Abu Dulaf, a brave and noble Arab, was chief of the principality of Hamadan, where his family held a high repute. Having taken the side of Amîn, he was unwilling after his fall to bow before Mamun, and so retired to his Persian home. A blind poet composed a beautiful but extravagant panegyric, lauding his friend as the first of the Arabs, which so irritated Mamun, as if aimed in depreciation of himself, that he had the poet cruelly put to death. Abu Dulaf himself shortly after surrendered, and his honourable reception is extolled as an act of grace on the Caliph's part, which cannot, however, affect our judgment of his heartless criminality towards the blind poet.[1] For

Certain caprice and cruelty notwithstanding.

---

[1] According to a grand-nephew of the Caliph, who tells the story, the verse which offended Mamun was to the effect that "every Arab entering the "lists of glory, must borrow his nobility from Abu Dulaf," which Mamun thought to be a slight upon himself. The blind poet excused the obnoxious verse by saying that of course he regarded the Caliph as altogether beyond the range of comparison. Mamun then said he would execute him not for that verse, but for another verse, in which he ascribed divine attributes to a

the rest, even leaving out of account the dark imputations as to the death of Fadhl and Aly-ridha, we have still the cruel treatment of Ibn Ayesha, as well as the fate of Harthama and Tâhir, to both of whom he owed so much; and lastly his bitter intolerance towards victims of the barbarous Inquisition. But considering the length of his reign and his magnanimous attitude towards the rebels of Bagdad, the balance must incline to the verdict of leniency and moderation in a Caliphate which, taken as a whole, is one of the most brilliant in the history of Islam. A.H. 198-218.

Death of Mamun, vii. 218 A.H. August 833 A.D.

Mamun was eight-and-forty years of age, when death overtook him near Tarsus, in his third campaign against the Greeks. It was a hot autumn day, and he sat with his brother Abu Ishac on the bank of a mountain stream, in the clear cool flood of which they laved their feet. "Come," said he to the companion who tells the story, "come, see how refreshing to the limbs are these limpid "waves. All that we want is but a dish of dates to make "the moment perfect!" Just then a mule was heard approaching with a burden of that very fruit. Two baskets full of the choicest dates, fresh gathered from the tree, were brought. They partook plentifully of them, with draughts also of the delicious icy water. As they arose, all three were struck with a burning fever. It was Mamun's last illness. The fever gained rapidly; and finding his end to be near, he had a rescript drawn up for all the Provinces, proclaiming his brother Abu Ishac successor, under the title of Motassim.[1] Then he gave minute instructions as to his own funeral and grave, direct-

---

mortal, whereupon his tongue was cut out and the poet died a miserable death. The narrator is a son of Motawakkil, who reversed the policy of Mamun. Weil holds it to be a well-grounded "historical fact"; but it is not given in the annals of the day; and one would be glad to question it as, at the least, greatly exaggerated.

I should also mention that under the year 200 A.H., *i.e.* while Mamun was yet in Merve, I find the entry: "Mamun in this year slew Yahya, be-"cause he called out to him—'O thou Caliph of the Unbelievers.'" There is no further explanation given.

[1] "He who maketh his refuge in the Almighty."

A.H. 198-218.

ing that none should at it weep or mourn. Calling his Brother, he specially enjoined upon him, along with other admonitions for a religious life and just administration, to enforce the right teaching which he held as to the origin of the Coran and other doctrines of Islam, and to hasten back to Irac. So passed Mamun away, and was buried at Tarsus, having reigned twenty years, besides the five preceding, during which he held at Merve the government of the East.

CHAPTER LXVI

MOTASSIM AND WÂTHIC

218–232 A.H. 833–847 A.D.

Motassim, 218 A.H. 233 A.D.

THE troops, at the first, refused to do homage to Motassim, preferring rather, in their growing insolence, to elect Abbas, son of the late Caliph; but he, summoned from Tyana, at once swore allegiance to his Uncle, and the army followed. Tyana was abandoned, the rising walls demolished, and whatever could not be carried off committed to the flames. Motassim then returned to Bagdad.

Intolerant supporter of Mamun's heterodoxy.

Motassim followed his brother Mamun, or surpassed him rather, in the two weak points of his rule, intolerance, to wit, and preference for the Turkish soldier. Freedom of discussion, to an extent never dreamed of till the days of Mamun, still prevailed, excepting in respect of the new dogmas of the Court. Science and philosophy flourished under such distinguished professors as Al Kindy, "the "philosopher of the Arabs," whose works, both original and borrowed from the Greeks, have won a European reputation. But from the Motazelite creed no divergence was tolerated; to it every Moslem must conform. Two dogmas were especially dear to the Caliph, namely, that the Coran was not eternal, and that by the disembodied eye in the future life, the Deity could not be seen. The severest pains and penalties, even to the death, awaited those who dared to differ. Bagdad was much disquieted by the intolerant rigour of the Caliph and his heated doctors; the famous Ibn Hanbal was again arrested, and being firm in the faith, was pitilessly scourged, and cast scarred and senseless into prison.

A.H. 218-232.

Increasing ribaldry of Turkish soldiery at Bagdad.

But a still greater trouble threatened the City in the swarms of Turkish soldiery that with daily-increasing numbers were planted in and around it. Thousands of *Memluks*[1] were yearly imported from the North-east. Some formed the bodyguard, the remainder swelled the army; and such as displayed military talent and presence, gaining the Caliph's favour, rose rapidly to chief command. Thus were the Arab soldiery, captains as well as rank and file, rapidly displaced; and, retiring to their deserts, instead of as heretofore pillars of the Caliphate, became a chronic element of disturbance and revolt. The evils of this system,—culminating hereafter in the Mameluke dynasty, the curse of Egypt,—were for the present confined to the Capital and its outlying cantonments. The Turkish horse, galloping in unbridled licence wildly about the streets, kept the women and children in constant jeopardy; and affrays and murders were the consequence. Riding through the city, a Sheikh began to accost Motassim in the simple Arab style,—"O Abu Ishac!" The escort set upon him as an ungainly intruder, but the Caliph stayed them, and listened to his words:—"A horde of foreigners," he said, "have been "planted in our midst, and from their insolence and "rapine there is no escape." Motassim never again rode abroad in Bagdad. This incident led to the building of Samira, with its palaces and imperial barracks, some sixty miles higher up the Tigris. Thither the Caliph retired the Turkish troops, and Samira thenceforth was made the seat of his Court. Bagdad was relieved, but the Caliph fell more than ever under the hand of these foreign levies.[2]

Leads to the founding of Samira.

The Moslem arms being engaged in many quarters, Motassim, soon after his accession, made peace with the

---

[1] The past participle of *malak*, "to own"; signifying purchased slaves, chiefly from Turkestan.

[2] Samira, properly *Sarr-man-raa*, "whoever saw it rejoiced," or *Delight of the eyes*, from the beauty of its situation; or as was wittily said, "*whoever saw it* with the Turks settled there, *rejoiced* at Bagdad being well rid of them." Harun had begun to build it when he first left Bagdad. But when he passed on to Ricca and settled there, the place fell into ruins till Motassim began to rebuild it.

A.H. 218–232.

Greeks and arranged an exchange of prisoners.[1] Among the troubles that threatened, there was first the strange tribe named Zatts, supposed to have been immigrants from the Indian border, who ravaged lower Mesopotamia. They were put to flight by Ojeif, an Arab general, who brought several thousands of them by boat to Bagdad, whence they were exiled to Asia Minor, and there attacked and dispersed by the Greeks.[2] An Alyite pretender also occasioned some anxiety in Khorasan, but was suppressed by Abdallah ibn Tâhir, now nearly independent ruler there.

Peace with Emperor, 218 A.H. 833 A.D.

Inroad of Zatt insurgents, 219–220 A.H.

The rebel who continued to cause the most anxiety at Bagdad was the famous Babek, who long held sway in Azerbijan, and had there the countenance of Armenia and Greece. He now sent his columns south, and the terror spread as far even as Hamadan. Vast multitudes in northern Persia adopted his faith and flocked to his standard. They were attacked with great slaughter, and pursued into Grecian territory. Against the freebooter himself, who retired into inaccessible haunts towards the Caspian, the Caliph sent Afshîn, one of his ablest Turkish generals, with a large and well-ordered force. But it was not before two years of hard fighting beyond Ardebil, and not without acts of treachery (too common with these Turkish leaders), that, one after another, the strongholds of Babek were taken; he himself effected his escape into Armenia, where he was captured and made over to Afshîn by an Armenian prince, with whom he had taken refuge. Thousands of Moslem captives, women and children, were recovered and restored to their families. Afshîn seized the vast treasures which had been amassed by Babek during all these years, and from them richly rewarded his officers. He then set out for Samira, carrying the famous freebooter and his brother in his

Babek's defeat and escape, 218 A.H.

Taken captive, 222 A.H. 837 A.D.

---

[1] An embassy to Bagdad is mentioned by the Byzantine writers, headed by John the Grammarian; but it is not noticed by Arab annalists.

[2] Their history is obscure. They may have been a Buddhist sect; but why they should have come across Persia from the east, and fallen upon Mesopotamia at this time, does not appear.

Babek taken prisoner,

train. The long career of this brigand prince, who had been now for twenty years the lord of Azerbijan, and whose endless roll of outrages and of Moslem generals beaten and armies destroyed, had for a whole generation struck terror into the people's mind,[1] made the march a royal ovation for Afshin. As he drew near to Samira, the Caliph sent him every day a fresh dress of honour with splendid gifts; and when the cortege approached, went forth in state with his Son and the Royal household, to bring him in with every mark of honour. Babek was kept under guard, and thither Motassim himself with his chief Cazee, went in disguise to gaze upon "the Shaitan of Khorasan," as they called him; who was then paraded over the city. Brought back to the palace, the Caliph, surrounded by his men of war, commanded Babek's own executioner to fall upon him, sever his limbs, and then plunge the knife into his still quivering trunk. The head was sent round the cities of Khorasan, and the body impaled near the palace. Babek's brother was reserved to be treated in like manner as a sight for the city of Bagdad, and his body there hung up by the river bank.

And cruelly executed.

War with the Emperor, v. 223 A.H. March 838 A.D.

The Emperor Theophilus, taking advantage of the Moslem arms being engaged against Babek, with whom the Greeks are said to have made common cause, had meanwhile been ravaging the south of Asia Minor, and carrying fire and sword even into the heart of Syrian territory. The bitter cry of a captive Hashimite lady, *Shame on Motassim!* reached the Caliph's ear. *Ready!* he exclaimed, starting up as if he heard her voice; and commenced forthwith preparations for war on the grandest scale. It was the spring of 233 A.H. when he marched for Syria. Passing on to Tarsus, he there marshalled his army in three divisions, led mainly by Turkish captains,

---

[1] Babek is said to have defeated six famous generals in these twenty years, slain 255,000 men, taken 3300 men, and 7600 women prisoners. Comparing this with the ravages of Mahomet's army, Al Kindy asks the Mahometan advocate, "Tell me, now, wherein the difference lieth between thy Prophet and Babek Khurramy, whose insurrection hath caused such grief to our lord the Commander of the Faithful, and disaster to mankind at large." *Apology*, p. 46.

Siege of Amorium.

and advanced against the Emperor. "Which is the virgin fortress of the Greeks?" he asked, resolved to mark his vengeance by a feat surpassing all before. "It was Amoria," they said,—the famous Amorium, more than half-way across the Peninsula;—and so thither the columns were ordered to converge. Theophilus, defeated in a pitched battle, left the city to its fate. After fifty-five days of siege, a renegade led the engines to a defenceless point, and the walls were about to be stormed when a general, named Vendu, issued from the city, and offered to surrender, if terms were given. He was graciously received, and the garrison, relying on the parley, held their hand. But the faithless Caliph meanwhile signalled a fresh attack, and Vendu, riding by his side, saw in consternation when too late that he was overreached. The city, thus easily captured, was treated with the last severities of war. Multitudes took refuge in the Cathedral, which was set on fire, and all perished in the flames. The chief families were set aside for heavy ransom, with all the goods worth carrying away; and the rest were put up to the highest bidder. All that remained was committed to the flames, and Amorium left a desolation. There was shortly after an exchange of prisoners, and the relations with the Emperor became for a time of a pacific character.

Burned and destroyed.

Conspiracy against Caliph.

The happiness of Motassim was, however, damped by an attempt which nearly brought his reign to an untimely end. Ojeif, the Arab chief, who had distinguished himself in the Zatt campaign, and now commanded the centre column against the Emperor, was roused to jealousy by the favours lavished on the Turkish generals, and by their insolent bearing towards himself and his fellows. Goaded thus, he conspired against Motassim, and persuaded Abbas to aspire to the Throne which at the first he had renounced. The plot, joined by other Arab leaders, and even by some of the Turks, was delayed till Amorium should fall, and then the distribution of the spoil was to be the signal for slaying the Caliph and his two Turkish favourites, Afshîn and Ashnas. An attempt to plunder the spoil and in the confusion accomplish the

A.H. 218-232.

Barbarous execution of conspirators.

traitorous design, was crushed by Motassim, who boldly rushed upon the plunderers sword in hand, and dispersed them. The plot came prematurely to light by the talk of some drunken confederates. The Caliph disbelieved the existence of so widespread a conspiracy, till Abbas himself, plied with wine, confessed to him the whole. He was made over to Afshîn, who, withholding water to drink, thus starved him to death, and Ojeif met the same fate. For another, carried into Syria, a well was dug, into which he was cast, and the pit filled in upon him while yet alive. Thus, with signal pains and penalties, the chief conspirators were all destroyed. The conspiracy had moreover the disastrous effect of throwing the Caliph altogether into the hands of his Turkish captains, and of gradually ousting the alienated Arab leaders from all chief commands. Among the Turks themselves there was but little love or loyalty to lose; envy and hatred, greed and lust of power, made the East but the theatre of intrigue, treachery and violence, in which there was respect neither for life nor right. And they who suffered most were the Caliphs themselves, who, as long as the Court remained at Samira, became the miserable puppets of their Turkish generals or the helpless victims of military outrage.

Turkish begin to supersede Arabian officers.

Afshîn's misdeeds, 224 A.H.

Afshîn himself was soon to fall. Maziar, the native prince of Tabaristan, withholding tribute, ravaged the south-east coast of the Caspian, and rebelled against Abdallah ibn Tâhir, now the acknowledged chief of Khorasan. Afshîn hated Abdallah because he had exposed his appropriation of Babek's spoil, and he also coveted his government. He therefore secretly encouraged Maziar, in the hope that he might himself be sent with a force to suppress the rising, and so supplant Abdallah. But Abdallah was able without help to defeat Maziar, who, taken captive, was sent to Samira; and there, confronted with Afshîn, accused him of abetting the rebellion.

His fall, 225 A.H.

Misdeeds of misappropriation were also charged against Afshîn. The attitude of the Caliph now changed towards him. In alarm he attempted to escape to the Caspian shores, but failing, was arrested and cast into prison. A court was constituted of the chief Cazee, the Vizier, and other Courtiers. But, strange to say, the charge was neither for treachery nor embezzlement. He was arraigned for holding Magian doctrines, and for covert hostility to Islam. Princes from Soghd were summoned as witnesses. Two men in rags, with scarred backs, were brought forward. "Knowest thou these?" asked the Vizier, who conducted the trial. "Yes," answered Afshîn: "the intendants of "a Mosque in Soghd. They built it on the site of a "temple which they razed to the ground, after casting "out the idol from the shrine. Now the treaty ran that "all were free to follow each his own religion; and so, "as breakers of the treaty, I caused them to be scourged." —"And this golden jewelled book of thine, wherein is "blasphemy against the Most High?" "It is a book," he replied, "inherited of my father, wherein is the wisdom "of the Easterns—good morals and also heresy; the first "I used, the last I left alone." Other imputations Afshîn contended were worthless, as based on Magian evidence. At last Maziar deposed that Afshîn's brother had written a letter couched in opprobrious terms against the whole Moslem race and their religion, and urging return to the old Magian faith. "For what my brother wrote," said Afshîn, "I am not responsible; but doubtless it was written "for expediency's sake, and to advance the conquests of "the Caliph by artifice, even as Abdallah doth in the "regions beyond." The chief Cazee, doubting the evidence, came to no conviction on the charge of heresy, but sent Afshîn back handcuffed to his prison, where, not long after, partaking of a dish of fruit sent by the Caliph, he died. His body was hung up to public derision and then burned. Strange rumours spread abroad of idols, jewelled figures, and Magian books found in his house: but the excited Moslem mind was ready to accept any tales regarding the Magians of the day. Maziar was scourged so cruelly that he sank under the infliction.[1] The trial

Afshîn tried as a Magian and enemy of Islam.

His death. 226 A.H.

---

[1] He acknowledged he was not circumcised, and stated personal reasons for omission of the rite. The jewelled book was likely Magian; or possibly Buddhist.

A.H. 218-232. of Afshin throws interesting light upon the Caliph and his court, as well as showing the hold which Magian doctrines and worship still retained, and the toleration accorded to them, in the far East.

Motassim's death, iii.227 A.H. Jan. 842 A.D. Motassim died not long after, having reigned nearly nine years. With an arbitrary, but on the whole a kindly disposition, he did nothing to stay the decline of the Caliphate. Of the Turkish captains on whom he leaned in his later days, he bitterly complained.[1] Had he looked to able Arab chiefs for support, it was yet possible to have restored vigour to the body politic. But he went over entirely to the Turks, and courted the influx of barbarian races, whose fatal yoke his successors could not throw off. And character. As proof of his kindness we are told that the palfrey of a poor husbandman having fallen into a quagmire, he helped him up with its burden again. On this, contrasted with the destruction of Amorium, Gibbon has the following reflection:—"To a point of honour, Motassim had sacrificed a flourishing city, 200,000 lives, and the property of millions. The same Caliph descended from his horse, and dirtied his robe to relieve the distress of a decrepid old man, who with his laden ass had tumbled into a ditch. On which of these actions did he reflect with the most pleasure, when he was summoned by the angel of death?"

Wâthic succeeds, 227 A.H. Motassim was succeeded by his son Wâthic, who, though born of a Greek slave-girl, inherited his father's Persian proclivities, and indeed with even greater intolerance. He was weak and arbitrary in his administration. His rapacity. The story of the Barmecides having been related to him, and how Rashid had recovered vast sums from their estates, he exclaimed, "What a fine example my Grand-"father hath set for me." He immediately proceeded to arraign his Ministers and their Secretaries, and having beaten one and threatened others, despoiled them of vast sums, from 100,000 to 1,000,000 dinars each. What a vivid conception does not this give us of the corruption of the minions at Court, and the caprice of their Master!

---

[1] In his last days, comparing Mamun's able officers with his own, he said to one of his courtiers:—"See what Afshîn hath come to. Ashnas, a poor "creature; Itach and Wassif, nothing in them." Yet these were the men on whom he leaned.

Disturbances.

During this reign there were risings, more or less, throughout the Empire;—in the parts about Mosul from the Kharejites; and in Persia from a rebellion of the Kurds; but the worst disturbances were in Syria and Arabia.

Palestine: the Veiled impostor, 227 A.H. 842 A.D.

Just before the decease of Motassim, a serious insurrection broke out in Palestine. A lady having been ill-treated by a soldier who sought to force her door, the husband went against the government, and set up as a leader of the Omeyyad line. Known as *Mobarca*, from his face being always veiled, he roused the whole country west of the Jordan. Israel The General sent by the Caliph was still engaged with this impostor, when a still more dangerous outbreak at Damascus called him thither. A battle was fought outside the City, and after above a thousand had been slain, order was at last restored. The force then returned to Palestine, where harvest having thinned the insurgent ranks, an easy victory was gained, but at great cost of life to the rebels, of whom some 20,000 were slain. Mobarca was carried off a prisoner to Samira.

Disturbances in Arabia, 230–2 A.H.

A year or two afterwards Arabia fell into a troubled state. The Beni Soleim and other Bedouin tribes, with now no career to divert their marauding tendencies, attacked the Holy cities, plundering the markets and committing havoc everywhere. They were defeated by Bogha, a Turkish general, who to strike terror imprisoned 1500 of them at Medina. While he was called away by fresh disturbances on the Syrian border, this great body of prisoners attempting to break away, were surrounded by the inhabitants, and slain by their negro slaves to a man. Order restored in the north, Bogha returned, and waged a long and not always successful campaign against insurgent tribes in the centre and south of the Peninsula.

Intolerant heterodoxy of Wâthic, 231 A.H.

But the danger that chiefly threatened Wâthic was nearer home; and arose, in short, from the rigour with which he enforced his heterodox views. The men of Bagdad, greatly irritated, set on foot a plot against the

A.H. 218-232.

Ahmed charged with heresy.

hated government. It was headed amongst others by a Moslem saint, named Ahmed, whose unmeasured denunciation of the intolerant Caliph gathered around him a great following. The day was already fixed for a threatening demonstration with flags and drums, when two of the conspirators fell to drinking, and issued forth a night too soon. The plot thus prematurely disclosed, Ahmed was sent to Samira, where the Caliph arraigned him before a court, not, however, on the charge of a treasonable rising, but of heresy. "What sayest thou of the Coran?" asked the Caliph. "That it is the word of God," replied Ahmed with heavenly ardour, for he coveted martyrdom, and had anointed his body for the burial. "Nay, but it is create?" rejoined the angry Caliph. "It is the word of God," repeated Ahmed calmly. "And what about the beatific "vision?" continued the Caliph. "This that the Prophet "hath told us, *Ye shall see your Lord at the Day of Judg-" "ment, even as ye see the full moon.*" "That he said but "in a figure," answered Wâthic; and he began to argue the point. "Dost thou command me then?" asked Ahmed. "Yea, verily." "Then I may not swerve from "the clear teaching of the Prophet." "Ye have heard "him yourselves," said Wâthic to the assembled Court; "what think ye?" The Cazee of the western Quarter cried, "By thy sacred Majesty! Verily his blood is law-"ful!" "O satisfy our thirst therewith!" exclaimed the rest,—all excepting Ibn Daud, the chief Cazee, who said, "Give space to repent; haply, he is crazed." "Nay, nay," shouted the Caliph; "leave me alone, while thus in his "blood I expiate my sins." And calling for Samsat (the famous sword of Madikerib[1]), he gave him a mortal blow upon the neck. Thereupon, the rest plunged their swords into him, and he fell a mangled corpse. The body was hung at Samira by that of Babek, and the head, sent to Bagdad under a guard, was set up with this inscription,—*The head of Ahmed, the Heathen and accursed Polytheist.*

Martyrdom of Ahmed.

---

[1] *Supra*, p. 38. This sword, of which he was despoiled in the war of the apostasy, is famous in Arab song, as of marvellous temper, and extreme antiquity.

A.H. 218–232.

Exchange of Greek prisoners, 231 A.H. 846 A.D.

Towards the close of his reign there was an exchange of prisoners between the Caliph and the Emperor. The two camps were formed on either side of a river beyond Tarsus. There were over 5000 Moslems, men and women, to be freed ; but even here the bigotry of Wâthic prevailed, for with an intolerance almost inconceivable, none were received in ransom but such as confessed the two favourite dogmas of the Court.

Death of Wâthic, 232 A.H. 847 A.D.

In the year following, Wâthic was seized with an insufferable thirst, the result of dissipated living. The remedy prescribed was exposure in an oven, which overheated caused his death. The only credit given to his short reign of six years was for generosity and benefactions, enjoyed especially by the poor of Mecca and Medina. It would take, however, some more substantial praise than this to set against the bigotry and cruel tyranny of which examples have been given above.

CHAPTER LXVII

MOTAWAKKIL

232–247 A.H. 847–861 A.D.

Motawakkil, 232 A.H. 847 A.D.

"WITH Motassim," writes Gibbon, "the eighth of the Abbassides, the glory of his family and nation expired." The glory of the *Nation* — the Arabian — had already paled before the rise of their Turkish rivals; the glory of the *Family* was fast setting under the outrage and violence of these same barbarians, whom they had summoned from the East to "the City of Peace." The Royal house were apt scholars, as well as abject slaves. In the Turkish school of tyranny and extortion, perfidy and bloodshed, they quickly became their masters' equals. And so the Caliphate hurried on to its decline and fall, with only here and there an impotent struggle to arrest the downward course.

His cruelty and rapacity.

On the death of Wâthic, the courtiers would have done homage to his son, but being yet a boy, the royal turban, robes and sceptre were all too great for his small frame; and so they chose instead Motawakkil, Wâthic's brother.[1] The new Caliph was not long in showing his cruel and vindictive turn. A couple of months had hardly passed, before the Vizier, who under Wâthic's reign had treated him with contumely, was cast into prison, and his property throughout the Empire confiscated. For months the unfortunate man was subjected

---

[1] Caliphs are no longer known by their proper names, but by their royal title signifying some attribute of faith or trust in the Almighty; as here, Motawakkil, or "He that putteth his trust (in the Lord)." And so with all the future names.

The Caliph's cruelty.

to the refined torture of being unceasingly kept awake while he would have slept. At last he was left alone and slept a day and night. Thus strengthened for the trial, he was put into a barbarous press (instrument of torture invented by the Vizier himself) so narrow that the sufferer was with difficulty forced within it, and lined with spikes which made shift impossible. Thus in agony he lay for days, and died. This as a specimen must suffice. Various other Officers of state were victims of his cruel rapacity; and specially the Commander-in-chief, who too had been wanting in respect, and would have shared like fate with the Vizier, had he not purchased pardon by the fine of eleven million pieces.

Fall of Itakh, 234 A.H.

Another dark picture casts a lurid light upon the Court and Caliph's life. Itakh, a general of renown in the Amurian war, and in the campaign against Babek, a favourite also of the preceding Caliph, was now commandant of the bodyguard, and boon companion of Motawakkil. In a brawl over their cups one night, Itakh, steeped in wine, so far forgot himself as to fall upon the Caliph and threaten his life. Next morning, coming to himself, he begged that the affair might be forgotten, and it was apparently forgiven. Advised to proceed to Mecca, he was placed over the pilgrim escort with a robe of honour, and given command of all the towns through which the pilgrims were to pass. It was but an artifice to put him off his guard. As he returned through Bagdad, the Governor went forth to meet him with a royal robe and gifts, and, on pretence of presenting him to a Hashimite assembly, closed the door upon his escort as he entered. "Had it been elsewhere than Bagdad," cried the victim, "he had not dared thus"; for Bagdad hated the Turks, and Itakh's friends were all at Samira, the Caliph's court. Cast into prison, he lingered for some months, weighted with heavy chains, and at last, being denied water to drink, died of thirst. His secretary and sons were also kept in durance till the Caliph's death.

His treacherous death, 235 A.D.

Motawakkil's reign was marked by the return to orthodoxy. The heresies of Mamun were abjured; and

A.H. 232-247.

Motawakkil returning to orthodoxy persecutes Free-thinkers, 237 A.H. 851 A.D.

the Motazelite professors had now their turn to suffer persecution. The eternity of the Coran was reasserted; and even to discuss the question of its creation proscribed throughout the Empire. The body of Ahmed, the confessor, was brought back with due solemnity to Bagdad and there, the head rejoined, prepared for burial; while innumerable crowds pressed round, if they might but touch the saintly relics. Among others who suffered for the now discarded faith, was the noble and learned Ibn Abu Daud, who had held the office of chief Cazee under the three preceding reigns. He was deposed and with his family cast into confinement, and their wealth and lands confiscated. One of the sons purchased freedom for the incredible sum of sixteen million golden pieces: but the father died a few years after, still a prisoner.

And Alyites.

Equally violent was the reaction against the descendants of Aly, on whom such favour had of late been lavished. Motawakkil hated them, and their teaching also. In company with his boon companions he treated the memory of Aly the Prophet's son-in-law with indecent contumely. A bare-headed buffoon, with a pillow stuffed in front, dared dance before the Caliph, while they sang around, *Behold the pot-bellied bald one, the Caliph of Islam.*[1] And Motawakkil, enjoying the scene, joined in laughter with the rest. Such ribald and profane contempt of that which was most dear and sacred to the Moslem heart, alienated his followers at large and met with reproaches from his own son.[2] So far indeed did Motawakkil carry his hostility that he had the tomb of Aly's son Hosein razed to the ground, ploughed over and sown with corn; and he even threatened with imprisonment any pilgrims who ventured to visit the shrine of Kerbala. On the other hand, he honoured the first three Caliphs and even the Omeyyad dynasty, and we read of one beaten to death for speaking opprobriously of Abu Bekr, Omar, and

---

[1] See above, p. 303.

[2] The profane buffoonery must have produced profound sensation; for the annalist adds, "This was one of the causes which justified Muntassir in taking his father's life." But that no doubt is an after-thought.

Ayesha. He was thus a thorough Syrian, and loved the Arab race.

Severe enactments against Jews and Christians, 235-39 A.H.

With the return to orthodoxy, the sumptuary laws against Jews and Christians, long fallen into desuetude under the tolerant reigns preceding, were now reimposed with the utmost stringency, and with new marks of degradation. Coloured stripes must be sewn upon their garments and those of their slaves, with restrictions as to flowing girdles; their women to wear yellow veils abroad; riding confined to mules and asses, with wooden stirrups and knobs upon their saddles; the figure of Satan must be on the door-posts of their houses, on which moreover was imposed a special tax; tombs must be level with the ground; they were debarred from offices of State; their children forbidden to be taught in Moslem schools or by Moslem masters; Churches recently built to be demolished; and no Cross paraded at their festivals, or erected in any street. To such extent did intolerance march hand in hand with orthodoxy.[1]

Division of empire, 235 A.H.

Early in his reign Motawakkil divided the provinces among his sons, giving the Western to Muntassir the eldest, and the Eastern to Mutazz. But gradually the latter became his favourite. He was placed in possession of the mint and treasuries; and his name was stamped upon the coinage, indicating him thus as successor to the Throne.

Rise of Saffarides.

With such a Ruler, and so demoralised a Court, we need not wonder that the bonds of order were everywhere relaxed. Abroad, as at home, rebellion more or less prevailed. In Sejestan the Saffaride adventurers began to supplant the Taharide family. Azerbijan rebelled, and was with difficulty reduced. Lower Egypt was attacked by a Byzantine fleet which for some time held Alexandria; and Upper Egypt by pagan tribes, which withheld the tribute due from the gold mines, and spread terror over

---

[1] A Christian apothecary who embraced Islam, but after several years returned to his ancestral faith, refusing to recant was put to death, and burned (242 A.H.). This, however, would be held by Moslems to be in accordance with their law.

A.H. 232–247.

Outbreak in Upper Egypt, 241 A.H.

the land. To check these ravages, troops were sent to the southern districts, which (as in our own day) were supplied with provisions by sea from the Suakin coast. The insurrection was quelled, but not without much bloodshed. The leader, Aly Baba, admitted to terms, was carried to Samira, where he was received with special honour by the Caliph, and put in charge of the pilgrim road between Egypt and Mecca. His tribe still held to their fetish faith, and Aly Baba shocked the men of Samira by carrying with him an idol of stone, the object of his daily worship. It is strange to see the heathen thus tolerated and honoured with an important trust, while Christian captives, refusing Islam, were put to death.

Bogha's success in Armenia, 237–8 A.H.

In Armenia, which in the war with Babek had been on friendly terms with the Moslem court, the overbearing conduct of a Moslem general, who treacherously sent some of their patricians to Samira, led to a serious outbreak, in which the hated officer was slain and his troops cut to pieces or scattered in the hills to perish in the cold. A heavy campaign under Bogha "the elder," took a signal revenge, 30,000 were slain and great numbers sold into slavery. Bogha then advanced to Tiflis, where a prince of the Omeyyad line had established himself as independent ruler. The City, built of wood, was destroyed by streams of naphtha, and 50,000 perished in the flames. He then advanced to the shores of the Caspian and the Black sea. Certain Armenian princes were sent from thence to the Caliph's court, who, refusing to accept Islam, fell martyrs to their faith.[1]

Asia Minor, 241 A.H.

On the side of Asia Minor, the border was the scene of raids first by the Moslem troops and then by their enemies. The Greeks carried off so many prisoners, that thousands are said to have been put to death by the Empress Theodora, and only those spared who embraced the Christian faith. Some 900 men and women alone were left for ransom.[2] In the next few years, the Greeks

---

[1] This, told by the Byzantine writers, is not mentioned by our annalist; see Weil, ii. 362.

[2] The number put to death by the empress is given at 12,000. Bar

A.H. 232–247.

Rebellion at Hims, 240–1 A.H.

again advanced towards Syria and laid siege to Sameisat; and then the Moslems, aided by the Paulician enemies of the Emperor, made reprisals, carried off immense booty in herds and flocks, and took the town of Lulu. It was restored in return for a thousand captives, but beyond this, and large moneys paid in ransom, no permanent gain accrued on either side. At home, the northern tracts of Syria were in a disturbed condition. Hims expelled its governor, and continued in rebellion for a length of time. Troops from Damascus and Ramleh at last restored order, and many captives were sent to Samira. But it was the Christians that here as elsewhere suffered most. Having made common cause with the rebels, they were expelled the city, their churches demolished, and one that adjoined the Great mosque taken within its bounds.

Caliph tries Damascus for his court, 244 A.H.

After holding his court for twelve years at Samira, the Caliph transferred it to Damascus. His predilections were always with the West; and at the capital of the Omeyyads, while regaining the friendship of the Syrians, he would be free from the tyranny of the Turkish soldiery. But after a residence of two months, he found the climate too severe, and returned to Samira.[1] In that neighbourhood he spent his later years, and lavished untold sums in founding a new residence called Jafariya on the river bank. There he built the *Pearl*, a beautiful palace, and the *Hall of Delight*, surrounded with parks and streams and gardens, and crowded with every means of enjoyment, music, song, and gay divertisement. Vast treasures thrown away, for on his death the fairy scene soon became a deserted ruin.

Founds Jafariya.

Capricious cruelties.

To supply the means for such extravagance, recourse was had to all kinds of extortion. The offices of State were given to such as bid the highest for them. The

---

Hebraeus speaks of 20,000 prisoners of whom 8000 were given up, and 12,000 put to death. We must hope that in such statements there is vast exaggeration.

[1] He went, we are told, in the months of Safar and Rabi I, *i.e.* May to July, and began to build offices for the various departments of State, but was driven away by the boisterous weather, cold and snow;—a strange experience there for the middle of summer.

A.H. 232–247.

Caliph's cruelty.

case of Najah, chief of the exchequer, is a sample of what prevailed. He made a demand on two officers for arrears of revenue at four million pieces. Obeidallah the Turk whose help, as Motawakkil's Vizier, the debtors sought, bade them give him a note acknowledging two millions. At the same time he persuaded Najah to tell the Caliph that he had made the demand in error when under the influence of wine, and now withdrew it altogether. Thereafter the Vizier went to his Master, and showed the note of hand admitting half the claim. Delighted to get even so much, the Caliph was equally enraged at the apparent deceit and malversation of Najah, who was accordingly made over to the two debtors to punish as they willed. These subjected him to torture under which he expired, and confiscated the entire property of the family which just equalled the debt they had to pay.[1] Intemperate hatred of the house of Aly was kept up to the end. The famous grammarian Ibn Sikkit, tutor in the house of Tâhir, and employed in the same capacity by Motawakkil himself, happening to enter while the young Princes were present, the Caliph asked him, "Which dost thou prefer, "Ibn Sikkit?—these my two sons, or Hasan and Hosein?" Making no pretence of preferring the former, Motawakkil bade his Turkish guard trample on his body, and he was carried out dying to his home.

Assassinated by his son, x. 247 A.H. Dec. 861 A.D.

The Caliph, gradually estranged from his eldest son Muntassir, had already, as we have seen, conferred on Mutazz, the second, marks of superior favour. His preference became year by year more marked, and Muntassir was not only subjected to indignities whenever he appeared at Court, but Motawakkil, when unable to preside at the Public prayer, sent the brother in pomp to take his place. Things became worse and worse; and one night after a carousal, the Caliph, overpowered with wine, abused Muntassir so grossly that he could bear it no longer, and resolved on putting an end to his father's life. This could the more easily be done, as Motawakkil had alienated

---

[1] The torture applied to Najah is too gross to be repeated. Ibn Khallican, iii. 61.

Wassif and other Turkish leaders, confiscated their estates, and made them over to new favourites of his own. So during the night, when he had well drunk and gone to sleep, and the gates had been closed by the guards already gained over by Muntassir, Bogha "the less," surnamed "the Winebibber," Musa (acting for his father Bogha the elder, who was in command at Someisat), and other conspirators of barbarous name, rushed in upon the senseless Monarch and despatched him with their swords. By his side, a favourite Turk who never left him was also slain. The report was spread that Motawakkil had been assassinated by this favourite, whom for the crime they had put to death,—a tale which of course found little credence anywhere.

Assassination.

Praise given by the annalists to this reign of fifteen years for the Caliph's return to Orthodoxy and generous patronage of Poets and men of learning, makes but sorry amends for a life of cruel tyranny, bigotry, and self-indulgence.

Orthodox but cruel, bigoted, and dissipated.

CHAPTER LXVIII

MUNTASSIR AND THREE FOLLOWING CALIPHS

247–256 A.H. 861–870 A.D.

Muntassir, 247 A.H. 861 A.D. AIDED by the Turkish faction, Muntassir succeeded without much difficulty to the throne. His pious title,—*He that triumpheth in the Lord*,—did not avail to prolong his reign above half a year, or save him from the pangs of a parricide. Notwithstanding his crime, he is lauded because, unlike his Father, he loved the house of Aly, and removed the ban on pilgrimage to the tombs of Hasan and Hosein. The Turkish party, fearing the revenge of his brothers for having connived at the murder of their Father, prevailed on Muntassir to disentail them from the succession, and in their place appoint his son as Heir-apparent. The Vizier, jealous also of Wassif, persuaded Muntassir to send him on a campaign against the Greeks. Early in the following year the Caliph died, but whether a natural death, or poisoned, is uncertain.[1] His death, 248 A.H. 862 A.D.

Mustain elected by Turks. On Muntassir's death, the Turkish chiefs held a conclave to select his successor; they would none of Mutazz, nor his brothers, for the reason just stated; so they elected in his stead another grandson of Motassim, and

---

[1] He is the first of the Abbassides whose tomb is known; it was made by his mother, a Greek slave-girl. The earlier Caliphs desired their tombs to be kept secret, for fear of desecration.

Disorder at Bagdad and Samira.

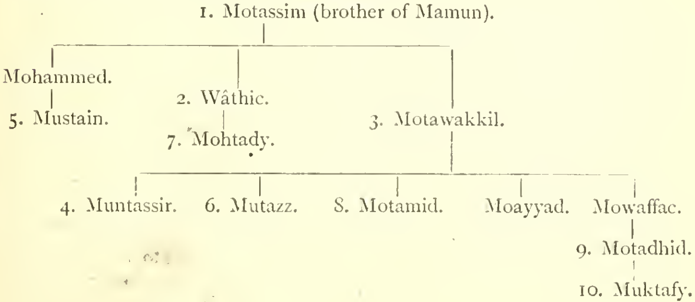
saluted him under the title of Mustain.[1] Suddenly the Arabs and western troops from Bagdad, displeased at the choice, attacked the courtly assembly, broke loose the prison, and plundered the treasury and armoury. They were attacked by the Turkish and Berber soldiery, and after a round fight, in which many fell, succumbed. Bagdad had yet to learn that the Caliphate no longer depended on Arabian choice, but had passed into other hands. Mohammed, grandson of Tahir, governor of Bagdad, persuaded the city to submit, and the succession was thereafter peaceably acknowledged throughout the land. Mutazz, and Moayyad his brother, threatened by the troops, resigned their title to succeed, and were then, by way of protection, kept in durance. On a second outbreak in their favour, the Turks would have put them both to death, but the Vizier interposed and saved their lives, for which act of mercy his property was seized by the Turkish soldiery, and himself banished to Crete. The new Vizier, Atamish, held the entire patronage of office at his pleasure, and so his fellows as a rule were presented to provincial governments and commands. The Empire, in fact, both at home and abroad, had passed into the hands of Turcomans.

Disasters in Asia Minor and Armenia, 249 A.H. 863 A.D.

In the following year, the Moslem campaign against the Christians was singularly unfortunate. Two whole corps in Armenia and Asia Minor, some 3000 strong, with their leaders, were cut to pieces. The tidings drove Bagdad wild. The ancient cry for a Holy war rang

---

[1] This table will explain the relationship:—



A.H. 247-256.

Cry for Holy war; and riot at Bagdad.

through the streets. It was the godless Turks that had brought disaster on the faith, murdered their Caliphs, and set others at their pleasure up. With such cries the City rose in uproar; the gaols were broken and the bridges burned. But Bagdad could no longer dictate to its rulers; it could only riot. The crusading spirit was, however, strong enough to draw large levies from the provinces around, who flocked as free lances to fight against the infidel. But the Turks cared for none of these things, nor did the Caliph. They were far otherwise engaged. The leaders had fallen out among themselves. There was riot and plundering and breaking of the gaols again at Samira. After this was put down, Bogha and Wassif conspired against Atamish the Vizier, who was accused of squandering the revenue on the Caliph's mother and retainers.

Outrages of Turks.

Attacked in the Palace, he attempted in vain to fly, or secure protection from the Caliph; and after being surrounded for two days was seized and put to death. One Vizier succeeded another at the caprice of the tyrant courtiers of Samira, who kept Mustain at their mercy by having his cousin Mutazz as rival in reserve.

Disturbances throughout the empire, 250 A.H. 864 A.D.

Meanwhile, things were not prospering elsewhere. Kufa threw itself into the arms of Yahya, a descendant of the Prophet, who beat back the imperial troops; but at last fell in battle. His head was exposed at Samira, and then sent to Bagdad for a similar purpose. But so vast were the crowds that thronged the spot, and so intense their excitement as they cried,—"What would the "Prophet say to this outrage on his own flesh and "blood!"—that the head had to be removed, placed in a box, and guarded in the armoury. In the East, the Tahiride dynasty, still nominally dependent on the Caliphate, and hitherto a real support, was falling rapidly into decay before its Saffaride enemies on the side of Sejestan, and the Alyite aspirants on that of Tabaristan.[1] The latter, now founding a Shie-ite dynasty

---

[1] There is mention of two elephants sent to Bagdad by the Tahiride prince, with some idols taken at Kabul, where idolatry seems still to have prevailed, or perhaps some development of Buddhism.

A.H. 247–256.

Disturbances in Arabia.

that survived for half a century, advanced upon Irac, and an army had to be sent for the protection of that frontier. To the south, another Alyite pretender, with a following of freebooters, ravaged Arabia, plundered the Kaaba, exacted heavy ransom from the Holy cities, slew over a thousand pilgrims, and after keeping the Peninsula throughout the year (251) in terror and distress, retired at its close to Jedda. In Mosul and Palestine, in Hims and Ispahan, in fact, in every quarter, we see anarchy and rebellion rife.

Mustain retires to Bagdad.

Beginning of 251 A.H. 865 A.D.

For Mustain himself the end was now at hand; and for Bagdad the horrors of another siege. Bogha "the less" and Wassif, the two chief Turkish leaders, fell out with Baghir, another Turk, about an estate received in reward for Motawakkil's murder. The quarrel, as usual, bred riot and danger to the Caliph, who, hearing that Baghir's party sought his life, proceeded in concert with the other two to seize and imprison Baghir, and eventually put him to death. On this the Turkish troops in Samira rose in anger and rebellion; and the wretched Caliph, to escape his tyrants and the impending danger, descended by boat, with Bogha, Wassif, and others, to Bagdad. The Turks sent after him a party of their captains, entreating him to return to Samira. He reproached them for ingratitude:—"Did ye not ask of "me and I gave you houses for your families,—2000 boys "and 4000 girls, and wives to boot, with portions for "them all?" They fell at his feet for pardon, and he gave it. "Wilt thou not then," they said, "return with us to Samira?" But this the Caliph would not, and hard words followed between the two sides, in the heat of which one of the Turkish speakers received a blow. The insult rankled in their minds, and on returning to Samira, the troops rose *en masse*, and bringing forth Mutazz from his confinement, saluted him as Caliph. Within a few weeks, his brother Abu Ahmed, with 50,000 Turks and Khorasanies, and 2000 Berbers, bore down upon Bagdad, which meanwhile had been preparing as best it could for defence by entrenchments, stores of naphtha, and engines

Turks elect Mutazz Caliph, march on Bagdad, And besiege the city throughout the year 251 A.H. 865 A.D.

planted at the gates. It is a harrowing chapter which details the horrors of the year,—the siege and sallies,—while the country all around was embroiled and suffered with its Capital. Victory was now on this side, now on that. Persia and the provinces were mostly in the interest of Mustain; but all were so disorganised that no real help arrived; and supplies and tribute sent were mostly intercepted on the way. In truth, the Arabs, Mustain's chief support, could not stand against the Turkish hordes. A column sent from Ricca for the defence of Bagdad having been ignominiously defeated, the Governor exclaimed,—"*What use of Arabs now without the Prophet and angelic aid?*" The taunt had truth. It was no longer for the faith they fought,—the faith that had nerved them in bygone days to victory. It would be unprofitable to follow the weary accounts given us month by month of fighting in and around the Capital. The Turks began gradually to gain ground, and the chiefs around Mustain to desert the failing cause. The Citizens at last suspected their Tahiride governor, hitherto the Caliph's loyal supporter, of leaning towards the rebels; and he, driven to extremities by plots and treachery all around, induced Mustain by alternate threats and promises to abdicate in favour of Mutazz. He was to live at Medina with a sufficient income; Bogha and Wassif, who had faithfully stood by him, were to have important governments; the treasure was to be divided between the garrison of Bagdad and the Turks, the latter with a double share. The conditions signed, the Governor received the ministers and courtiers of Mustain, and having assured them that he had done what he had for the best and to stop further bloodshed, sent them to Samira to do homage to the new Caliph, who ratified the terms, and took possession of Bagdad in the early days of 252 A.H. He also sent to Mustain his mother and family from Samira, but not until they had been stripped of everything they possessed.

End of 251 A.H.

Mustain abdicates. Beginning of 252 A.H. 866 A.D.

Mutazz succeeds.

Mutazz, thus placed upon the throne, proved but too apt a pupil of his Turkish masters. He was surrounded

A.H. 247–256.

by parties each jealous of the other. At Samira, the Turks were at daggers drawn with the "Westerns";[1] while the Arabs and Persians at Bagdad who had supported Mustain, regarded both with equal hatred. Mutazz was thus hemmed in by a horde of hungry harpies, ready for plot or treachery whether against each other or against himself:—a poor justification, however, for the perfidy and bloodshed which he, not less than they, pursued.

Mutazz causes Mustain to be assassinated,

He began with the deposed Caliph. The conditions solemnly guaranteed were cast to the winds. Instead of finding a refuge at Medina, Mustain was kept at Wasit. Thence he was treacherously despatched, together with his wife, by Ahmed ibn Tulun, to the house of an assassin, who put them both to death. Carrying Mustain's head to the Caliph, "Here," cried the executioner, "behold thy "cousin's head!" "Lay it aside," answered the heartless Mutazz, who was playing at chess,—"till I have finished "the game." And then, having satisfied himself that it was really Mustain's head, he commanded 500 pieces to be given to the assassin as his reward.[2] Muayyad, his own brother, being next for the Throne, was also cruelly put to death. The Turkish soldiery, in a brawl with the Westerns, had taken this brother's part, and the jealous Caliph forthwith cast him, and also another brother, Abu Ahmed, who had bravely led the troops in the late struggle on his side, into prison. There the Turks attempted Muayyad's release, and Mutazz, the more alarmed, resolved on his death. He was smothered in a downy robe (or, as others say, frozen in a bed of ice); and the body was then exposed before the Court and Cazees, as if, being without mark of violence, he had died a natural death:—a transparent subterfuge.

And one of his own brothers.

Riots in Bagdad, 252 A.H.

Bogha and Wassif, instead of promised preferments, were cut off altogether from the civil list; orders were also issued for their assassination; but, at the intercession of a Princess at court related to them, their lives were spared.

---

[1] So called, as Berbers and other African races from the West.

[2] So according to Ibn Athir. Other authorities are not so clear as to the connivance of Ahmed, founder of the Tulunide dynasty. Weil, ii. p. 398.

A.H. 247–256.

Riots in Bagdad and Samira.

They returned with their families to Samira; and Bogha, in the strange vicissitudes of the day, became soon after the prime favourite of the Caliph. Riot succeeded riot, both at Samira and Bagdad. The revenues were squandered at the profligate Court, and little left wherewith to pay the troops. The city guards at the Capital surrounded the palace at Bagdad, clamorous for their pay. The Governor wrote to Mutazz for an advance; but he, prompted by the Turks, replied that "if the guards were needed for "himself, he himself might pay them; if for the Caliph, he "cared not for them." Thereupon the tumult was renewed; the mob refused to let the Caliph be named in the Mosque, and so there were no prayers observed that Friday. Before the insurrection was put down, the Governor had to burn one of the bridges, and set fire to an adjoining bazaar, in order to keep the rebels off. Nor were the outbreaks at Samira less outrageous. The Turks fell out with the Westerns, and fought till it was arranged that they should have each a representative in the chief offices of State. Next year all joined together, Turks, Africans, and Persians, to storm the Palace for their pay. Wassif and Bogha, now the Caliph's chief advisers, sought to appease them. "Here, take this," the former cried, as he cast a handful of sand to them,—"it's all we have." The other promised to represent their case to the Caliph, and while he went, the savage soldiery fell on Wassif, and having cut him to pieces, stuck his head upon a chimney. To the offices of the deceased succeeded Bogha, who for the moment ruled supreme. But his time, too, shortly came. He sought the following year to induce Mutazz to transfer his court to Bagdad, where he would be more independent of the foreigners. His jealous rivals represented this as treachery; and Bogha fled but only to be seized and slain. His head was exhibited both at Samira and at Bagdad, where the Westerns vented their hate by burning it to ashes.

Palace stormed, 253 A.H.

Wassif and Bogha murdered, 254 A.H.

Ahmed ibn Tulun appointed to Egypt.

Babkial succeeded Bogha. He was invested with the government of Egypt, which, like other Turks promoted at the Court, he administered through a deputy; and for

Tulunide dynasty.

the post he appointed as his representative Ahmed ibn Tulun, the one concerned in the death of Mustain, and founder of the Tulunide dynasty. Ahmed's story is typical of the times, both in respect of the sudden rise of slaves to office, and the tendency of local governors to become independent of the central power. His father, a Mameluk, captured in Ferghana, was presented to Mamun, and brought up among the Turkish slaves at court to the military profession. Ahmed, bred thus in the school of Samira, was favoured by the Caliph as excelling both in the art of war, and in letters and the arts of peace. Mustain promoted him to a post of honour, and gave him a young slave to wife, who became mother of the Tulunide princes. Babkial now sent him as his deputy to Egypt, where gradually growing in power, he at last threw aside the yoke of the decrepid Caliphate, and became its independent ruler.

Foreign policy not successful.

The policy of Mutazz was as crooked abroad as it was at home. The Tahiride dynasty in its decay was sorely pressed by Yacub the Saffaride[1] of Sejestan, who had designs of annexing Kerman, and to validate his claim sought the grant of its government from the court of Bagdad. Aly, the governor of Fars, who also aimed at independence, made the like request. Mutazz conferred the title at once on the one and on the other, hoping by the contest that must ensue to weaken both; but the Saffaride in the end prevailed. Nowhere did the arms of Mutazz meet success. Mosul, with the surrounding country, was seized by Mosawwir, a Kharejite, who held it in rebellion for many years. In Asia Minor the Moslem forces were beaten by the Greeks, one of the Generals being made prisoner. And even from the adjacent provinces immediately around Bagdad, the revenue was withheld.

Military riot for arrears of pay.

Little more need be said of Mutazz. A dwindling revenue precipitated the end. The army's pay having been withheld, Salih son of Wassif, on their behalf, seized the personal secretaries of Mutazz and of his brother, with the ministers of departments, and demanded the money

---

[1] So called, the founder having been a brazier (saffâr) by trade.

A.H. 247–256.

Mutazz seized and put to death.

embezzled or concealed by them. There being no answer but an empty treasury, they were put in irons. The Caliph besought the insurgents to release his private secretary, but they were deaf to his entreaty. The accounts of the unfortunate ministers were seized, but neither thus nor otherwise could anything be extracted from them. Returning to the Caliph, they agreed that if he would but advance 50,000 pieces, they would for the present be content. Mutazz, in this extremity, sent to his mother Cabîha, a sobriquet given her by Motawakkil for her beauty.[1] Her arts and influence had gained for her vast treasures, hoarded by her in secret places. Appealed to now, the heartless creature, clinging to her ill-gotten lucre, replied that she had nothing by her. Salih, and Musa son of Bogha, now driven to extremities, resolved, in concert with Babkial, to depose Mutazz, and carried out the design with brutal inhumanity. Followed by a clamorous troop, they seated themselves at the Palace gate, and called for the Caliph to come out. He had taken physic, he sent to say as an excuse; and not suspecting treachery, called them in. Entering, they beat him with clubs and kicked him; then dragging him by his torn robes outside, they left him seated there in the scorching heat of a midsummer sun. Taken thence, he was shut up in a room alone without food or water; and so after three days the wretched Caliph died, at the early age of twenty-four.

Mohtady succeeds, vii. 255 A.H. June 869 A.D.

The choice of the Turks now fell on his cousin Mohtady, son of Wâthic by a Grecian slave-girl. Retired and unassuming, they regarded him as one likely to serve their ends. But they mistook the man. Firm and virtuous as compared with those before him, he held to his own purpose. Earlier, and supported by the Arabs, he might have restored life to the Caliphate. But, both as regards number and discipline, foreigners had now the upper hand. Mohtady came too late. "The wide world," says our annalist, "was all upside down." At first he declined the offer, thinking it unjust to Mutazz. But the deposed Caliph, brought before him, resigned into his hands the burden he could no longer bear; and so all Samira did homage. Bagdad rose in tumult, and demanded that Abu Ahmed, the late Caliph's younger brother and the people's favourite, should succeed. Money from Samira—the panacea of the day—pacified the people; riot thus stayed, the oath was taken. The Court soon saw a transformation, unwonted for many a day;—singing girls and musicians expelled; beasts in the menageries slaughtered, and hounds turned adrift; justice done daily in open court; wine and games proscribed; and a frugal household. The new Caliph, in fact, had set the pious Omar son of Abd al Aziz, before him as his model and exemplar. His virtues.

---

[1] Cabih "horrid," "bad"; as we should say by contraries, "the little wretch."

On Mutazz's fall, Salih son of Wassif, lost no time in stripping of their wealth such of the courtiers as had fattened under the recent Caliphate. The secretaries were imprisoned, and forced by the lash to disgorge. Two died under the infliction. Cabîha had fled to a vault outside Samira with her treasure. She was traced, and confessed to having at Bagdad over a million pieces of gold. It was all seized, and with it a store of emeralds, pearls, and rubies of untold size and beauty; while she herself was banished to Mecca. As she left, Salih upbraided her for having with all these treasures grudged a paltry fifty thousand to save her son; and she in return cursed him in vilest terms,—a painful picture of courtly Samira. The tyranny of Salih, and fate of the officers tortured, affected Mohtady deeply. Referring to Cabîha,—"As for me," he said, "I have no mother[1] on whose slave-girls and "retainers to spend hundreds of thousands; I have no "need but for myself and brothers, and that but little." Salih's cruel extortion.

A few months after, there occurred another riot at Bagdad. The Persian governors, especially those recently appointed of the Tahiride family, were attended by escorts from the East, whose names not being entered on the civil Riot and outrage in Bagdad, 255 A.H.

---

[1] On Wâthic's death, Mustain had taken her to wife, and on his assassination, she was confined by Mutazz in Bagdad, where she died. Such was the wretched life of these Abbasside princesses.

A.H. 247-256.

Riot in Bagdad.

list, they were paid from a separate fund, and adjustment made from the treasury of Merve. Soleiman, head of that house, hard pressed by his enemies and obliged to fly from Khorasan, was now nominated governor of Bagdad; and his predecessor having carried off the eastern fund, he was driven to pay his escort from that belonging to the Native garrison. These resented the misappropriation and, joined by the Citizens, rose against the Eastern troops, who retaliated in robbery and outrage. The danger was increased by a Persian general who had accompanied Soleiman with a great following of soldiers and freebooters; and these now spreading themselves over Mesopotamia, drew thousands by the cry of plunder to the unfortunate City. After much fighting, they were forced to leave, and taking their way back by Nehrwan, ravaged the country as they went. Thus from every side, foreign levies, attracted like vultures to their prey,—whether Turks and Khorasanies, Persians, Negroes, or Berbers,—all brought misery and outrage on the wretched "City of Peace."

Musa's attack on Mohtady, 255 A.H.

Musa son of Bogha, under the previous reign, had been sent to war against the Alyite dynasty set up in Deilem, which had assumed a threatening attitude. On the troops conspiring against Mutazz, Cabîha had urged Musa to return and save her son; but soon after news of his death reached the camp, and so Musa remained with the army for the defence of Rei. Then followed tidings of the excesses and extortion of Salih; and Musa's captains, lusting for a share in the spoil, forced him, against Mohtady's command, to return with them to Samira. There he went straight to the Caliph, who was seated on the bench dispensing justice, and after altercation, carried him off on one of the attendant's horses, when the usual scene of riot and plunder followed. Reasoned with by Mohtady on the scandalous affront thus offered to his Sovereign's person, Musa and his followers returned to their loyalty, on assurance given that the crimes of Salih would be reckoned with and justice done.

Salih, now deserted by his friends, fled into hiding. Thence, by an unknown hand, he sent the Caliph a letter, offering submission to trial and restitution. Mohtady being in favour of this, the Turks assumed that he knew his hiding-place, and was conniving with him. They resolved on his dethronement; but Mohtady bravely met them sword in hand, ready to thrust through the first that should approach. He protested that he knew nothing of Salih's retreat, and promised public inquisition on the morrow after prayers. Meanwhile, the people learning the traitorous proceedings of the Turks, were so touched by the peril in which a Sovereign whom they had learned to respect and love was in, that they scattered throughout the streets and lanes of Bagdad, sheets on which was inscribed a call for prayer and intercession with the Lord to save their pious Caliph and confound the designs of the rebel Turks. A band of the foreign troops, touched by the appeal, rallied round Mohtady, who promised his best to reform the government, provide for payment of all dues, bring Salih to justice, and Musa also to account. Search for Salih still continued, without success and with danger to the Caliph, when fortunately he was discovered, pursued by the mob, and delivered over to Musa's retainers, who slew him and exposed his head, with the proclamation (strange sentiment for the Turks), "Such is the fate of him that slayeth his Master."

Salih pursued i. 256 A.H. Dec. 869 A.D.

And murdered, ii. 256 A.H. Jan. 870 A.D.

Things went on thus for several months, when the cry arose again for arrears of pay from the Turkish garrison of Bagdad. The Caliph told them that the treasury was empty, as Musa's brothers,—sons of the elder Bogha, the party now in opposition to Mohtady,—had embezzled all the revenues. These fled to Musa, who, with Babkial, was now engaged at Mosul with Mosawwir's insurrection. Driven to desperation, Mohtady himself stooped to perfidy. He sent, or suffered a Turkish party to send, promise of safe-conduct to the brothers; and when they came, not only exacted great sums of revenue from them, but caused one to be slain and cast into a well. Then he wrote to Musa to make over the army to Babkial and return to Samira; while at the same time he wrote to Babkial to compass the death of Musa. But Babkial, on

Mohtady again in difficulties.

A.H. 247–256.

Defeated by insurgents.

whose loyalty and friendship Mohtady had counted, went over to the side of Musa. Having shown him the letter, they both resolved to return at once to Samira, and there bide their time for putting an end to the Caliph's life. On their arrival, however, Mohtady, anticipating their design, seized Babkial, and resolved bravely to fight for the right, or perish in the attempt. Six thousand soldiers rallied round him, mostly Arabs and Westerns; but amongst them were also one thousand of the late Salih's Turks. The rebels came on, double the number, to the attack of Mohtady; on which, he gave the order to slay Babkial, and cast his head into the rebel ranks. But the day was gone. The faithless Turks deserted to the other side, and the rest lost heart. In vain Mohtady shouted, "Here is the Commander of the faithful; haste to the "rescue of the Caliphate!" There was no response. Passing the prison, he threw open its gates, hoping that the inmates would help him; but this too was in vain. And so he fled for refuge to the Commander of his bodyguard's house. Thence, seated on a mule, he was carried to the palace of a Turkish general, and pressure put to him to abdicate. He refused, and prepared for the end. Then, to give the appearance of justice to their work, the conspirators produced a paper in which Mohtady had guaranteed Musa and the rest that he would not use treachery towards them, which if he did they were released from their oath of fealty. Having thus, to their satisfaction, justified the sentence, they fell tumultuously upon him, with blows and kicks, and removed him into confinement, where, a few days after, he died. Witnesses deposed that there were no marks of violence on his body, which was buried with his predecessors. He was aged thirty-eight, and had reigned less than a year. The annalists laud his justice and his piety; and had he not yielded at last and met perfidy with the like, we might have placed Mohtady among the most excellent of his race.

Put to death, vii. 256 A.H. June 870 A.D.

A Turkish funeral.

Mohammed, one of Bogha's sons, was found dead having fallen in the fight. Over his grave, after the rude fashion of the Turcomans, a thousand swords were shivered.

CHAPTER LXIX

MOTAMID, AND MOWAFFAC HIS BROTHER

256–279 A.H. 870–892 A.D.

Transient return of prosperity.

AT this point, we come unexpectedly on a brighter view of the Caliphate, with a fair promise, maintained to the end of the century, of returning vigour and prosperity. The brave example of Mohtady, however sad its ending, and a succession of able rulers, contributed, no doubt, to this result. But the main cause was the return of the Court to Bagdad, where, supported by native feeling, it could better avoid the outrage and curb the influence of Turkish soldiery, while also bringing the Western element to check the Eastern. At anyrate, during the next three reigns, there was no repetition of the shameful attacks upon the person of the Caliph, which had made his court at Samira a byword among the nations.

Motamid, 256 A.H. 870 A.D.

On Mohtady's deposition, the leading courtiers brought out from confinement at Samira the eldest surviving son of Motawakkil, and saluted him as Caliph under the title of Motamid. Musa son of Bogha, engaged with the Kharejites at Ahwaz, hastened back to Court and did obeisance. Indeed, Musa, turning a new leaf, henceforth proved himself a brave and loyal servant, and some time after was appointed by the Caliph guardian of his son, to whom as Heir-apparent the Western half of the empire was entrusted. Motamid himself proved but a poor and helpless monarch. But his brother, Mowaffac, already mentioned under the name of Abu Ahmed, was the real ruler and stay of the Empire. On the Zenj rebellion bringing danger near to Bagdad, Motamid in alarm sum-

His brother Mowaffac the real Ruler.

A.H. 256–279.

moned him from his government at Mecca. Thenceforward he held the reins, and continued to do so till his death near the close of Motamid's life.

Zenj insurrection, 255 A.H. 869 A.D.

The Zenj insurrection, just noticed, spread terror and outrage for fifteen years all around. The leader, a Persian, gave himself out as a descendant of Aly. At the first, as such, he set up certain spiritual assumptions; but soon so plainly showed his real colours as an outlaw, that he was called *Khabîth*, that is, the Reprobate. After canvassing in Arabia with little success, he raised at Bussorah the standard of rebellion, proclaimed liberty to the captive, and endless spoil and rapine to all that followed his standard. A text inscribed on his banner was perverted to mean the knell of slavery.[1] Little wonder that slaves, taught by him to insult their masters, flocked in thousands to Khabîth, and Bedouins also in their lust of plunder. Zenj means "Ethiopian,"—the slavish dregs of Africa,—and hence the name of the insurrection. It was in 255 A.H. that they first took the field in force; and in the next two years they spread themselves across the whole delta of the Euphrates, and the banks of the Karoon as far as Ahwaz. Over and over again they beat back the Imperial troops, and by their fleets dominated both rivers. Emboldened by this success, they attacked Bussorah, took it by storm, and for three days subjected the citizens to every kind of outrage. Quarter was at last announced, and the multitude, drawn together by a treacherous proclamation, mercilessly massacred. The Great mosque was destroyed, and the city set on fire. The Caliph at last, alarmed by their near approach to the capital, summoned Mowaffac to take the field. He carried on the war vigorously against them, but at first with only partial success,—being obliged to suspend operations from time to time from pressing dangers elsewhere. A similar fortune attended Musa and other generals. Year after year, even under defeat, great bodies of the Zenjites invaded Irac, Khuzistan, and Bahrein, whether as marauding hordes or in regular line, striking terror into the helpless villagers, who fled to Bagdad for refuge. Ahwaz was sacked, and Wasit captured as a centre for their devastating operations. Thus for ten years the miserable land was kept in suffering and alarm. At last Mowaffac, relieved from external foes, concentrated his forces under his own immediate command, and that of his son Motadhid. The tide now turned against the servile swarm. They were gradually driven out of Khuzistan and cooped up in the lower delta ; but there they continued to hold a secure position, guarded by strong fortresses and the deep canals surrounding them. The contest, which still dragged its length for five years more, is told with wearisome detail. Even after the enemy was driven from their other strongholds, the chief fortress still resisted for three whole years the regular approaches of a siege, intermitted for a season in consequence of Mowaffac being wounded. Finding the cause hopeless, the rebels began to go over in great numbers to Mowaffac, who received them kindly, and even offered the arch-offender pardon, which he insolently rejected. At last the Citadel fell, and multitudes of women delivered from captivity were returned to their homes. Khabîth, overtaken in his flight, was slain, and as his head was held up before the assembled force, they fell prostrate, giving thanks to heaven for being at last delivered from the cursed Reprobate.[1]

---

[1] A curious perversion of *Sura* ix. v. 113:—"The Lord hath purchased "from Believers their souls (or their own selves) and their substance by the "promise of Paradise"; meant by the Prophet as an incitement to fight in the ways of the Lord, but here travestied as teaching that the persons of all believers, having been thus purchased, are thereby redeemed and no longer subject to slavery.

A.H. 256-279.

Zenjite rebellion, 265 A.H. 878 A.D.

Defeat and death of the Zenj leader, 270 A.H. 883 A.D.

The outlying provinces of the East have now for our history but a secondary interest. The traditional dominance of the court at Bagdad still imparted weight, if

---

[1] The inordinate length of the story and tendency to magnify show what a deep wound this savage and inveterate enemy inflicted on the country surrounding Bagdad. In 267 A.H., 5000 women released from one of the fortresses were sent to Wasit to be distributed to their homes ; shortly after we are told that 20,000 captives belonging to the Kufa villages were taken from another citadel. Mowaffac's force is given at 50,000, and we are told that the Zenj were six times that number. With all allowance for the mass of slaves that flocked to the Reprobate, such numbers are clearly fabulous.

A.H. 256-279.

nothing more, to any title derived from it; and the Caliph was everywhere prayed for in the public services, excepting in the case of open enmity. The Tahirides, beaten by the Saffarides, retire from the scene, and are hereafter mentioned only as resident in Bagdad, and holding chief municipal office there. The Alyite dynasty still retained the districts south-east of the Caspian; but a new enemy arose against them in the Samanide house,—a noble family, which held ancient office in Khorasan, and now aspired to independence. These distant movements, however, and the career of Khujistany, an adventurer who from 261 to 268 A.H., rose to great power in the East, affected the Caliphate little. But Yacub, the Saffaride, became a cause of danger. Not content with the various provinces his family had secured in the East, his ambition turned westward, and coveting Fars, he asked the Caliph for it. Motamid, offended at the demand, assembled the pilgrims returning eastward, and proclaimed in their ears that he had deposed Yacub from Khorasan. Yacub hastened to retaliate by an advance not only on the western provinces of Persia, but on Bagdad itself. Rejecting concessions which the Caliph, now alarmed, was ready to make, he crossed the Tigris below the Capital, passed Wasit, and was already close to Bagdad when, met by Mowaffac, he was routed with great slaughter, the loss of his camp, 10,000 mules with vast spoil, and driven back into his Persian provinces. The last of the Tahiride rulers who, beaten by Yacub, had been kept by him as a prisoner, escaped on his defeat, and welcomed at Bagdad was there installed as governor. It is curious to note that the Zenjite Reprobate, while yet in the field, offered to join Yacub after his defeat, in a fresh attack on Bagdad. The offer met this scornful reply:—"Say;—O ye Unbelievers! I worship "not that which ye worship; neither do ye worship that "which I worship."[1] Some years passed, and a friendly message was again sent by the Caliph to Yacub, who still held the western parts of Persia. The grand old warrior received it as he lay on his deathbed, the sword by his

State of the eastern provinces, 261 A.H. 874 A.D.

Hostilities of Yacub the Saffaride, 262 A.H.

265 A.H.

---

[1] *Sura* cix.

side, and a crust with onions as a relish for his frugal meal. Starting up in his couch, he replied to the Envoy,—"Speak "thus to thy Master. I am sick unto death. If I die, I am "quit of thee, and thou of me; if I live, there is nought "betwixt us but this sword, that I may take my revenge "of thee; or beaten, retire content (pointing to the crust) "with this simple fare." He died. Amr, his son, succeeding, dropped the father's hate, submitted himself to the Caliph, and was confirmed, with every honour, in the east to the farthest bounds of Khorasan and Sind. Some years after things changed again; for Mowaffac, now relieved of domestic as well as external pressure, and seeking to restore the Tahiride dynasty, had the Saffarides denounced from Moslem pulpits, and meeting Amr in the field, drove him from all his western possessions back to Sejestan. Towards the close of the reign we find Amr again in favour, and acknowledged as before. But in the end he fell, as we shall see, before the various antagonists who now sprang up in the East and fought for its supremacy.

A.H. 256-279.

Yacub's death.

Saffaride dynasty, 271-4 A.H.

We turn to Egypt, where Ahmed ibn Tulun, appointed as we have seen Governor of Fostat in 254 A.H., had gradually assumed independent power over the whole country. A wise and able ruler, the land flourished under his government as it had never done before. The revenues, instead of passing to Bagdad, were expended in public works at home; buildings, canals, and charities were the objects of his care, and a Mosque bearing his name is still the ornament of Cairo; learning was promoted, while a magnificent Court and powerful army maintained the dignity of Egypt without unduly increasing the financial pressure. Ahmed had for a while to fight at home against Alyite and other pretenders, whom he subdued; and then with like success against Ibrahim the Aghlabite ruler of Cairowan, who, after signal conquests in Sicily, had turned his aspirations eastwards. At this point, Mowaffac, jealous of the Tulunide's independent attitude, sent Musa, with the view of again reducing him to subjection. The Egyptian with his large resources easily repelled the invasion, while Musa's army, in want and discontent, mutinied at Ricca,

Tulunide rule in Egypt, 254-70 A.H. 868-73 A.D.

262 A.H.

A.H. 256–279.

and after long months of inaction forced him to retrace his way to Irac.

Ahmed ibn Tulun's campaign in Asia Minor and Syria, 264 A.H. 877 A.D.

About this time, the Byzantine court, taking advantage of the Caliph's domestic troubles, was making serious advances in Asia Minor. Tarsus, unfortunate in its governors, allowed the fortress of Lulu to fall into the enemy's hands. Ahmed ibn Tulun had long sought for leave to carry his Egyptian arms against the Greeks, but Mowaffac had scorned the offer. The Caliph, who regarded him with more favour than his brother, now committed the campaign into his hands. Placing his son Khomaria in charge at home, Ahmed gladly seized the opportunity, passed at once into Syria, which opposed his advance; but easily defeating the governors who came out against him, he took Damascus and Antioch, and advanced upon Tarsus. There he was ill received, and obliged to return to Syria left the Greeks to pursue their victories. But he maintained his hold of Syria, and turning his arms eastward took Harran. While carrying all before him in his farther advance on Mosul, he heard that his son Khomaria had left the capital and retired to Barca with all the treasure. There the foolish youth sought to found a new kingdom of his own; but warring westward was beaten back by the Aghlabites on Barca. He was seized by his father's troops, and carried back to Fostat, a miserable spectacle. By command of Ahmed, his son inflicted with his own hand condign punishment on the advisers who had led him astray. He was then himself beaten with a hundred stripes, after which Ahmed wept as, with a father's bowels of compassion, he upbraided him for his folly.[1]

268 A.H

Meanwhile Lulu, the freed Memluk of Ahmed, had been pursuing the victorious course begun by his Master, and extending the Tulunide rule from Syria to Mosul, when an unexpected turn of affairs occurred. Mowaffac being still in mortal combat with the Zenjites, the empire suffered everywhere from the helpless incapacity of his brother Motamid. The ambitious Ahmed here saw his opportunity. The Caliph, chafing at having only the shadow without the power of sovereignty, was to fly to Egypt, where the Tulunide, his faithful vassal, would secure to him the substantial enjoyment of the throne, and victory over his domineering brother. But he had not calculated on the vigilance of Mowaffac who, apprised of the plot, caused Motamid to be seized in his flight towards Mosul, and with his chief followers in chains, sent back ignominiously to Samira. Ahmed, thus foiled, vented his chagrin by dropping Mowaffac's name from the Public prayers; and Mowaffac retaliated by obliging Motamid to anathematise his protégé in all the Mosques that still acknowledged the Caliphate. Equally unsuccessful was Ahmed's attempt to assume the presidency at the annual Pilgrimage; for the officer whom he sent to represent him at Mecca was discomfited by the Imperial troops supported by the Persian pilgrims; and here, too, in the Holy house, the Tulunide was denounced at the public service before the assembled multitude. Worse, however, than all, was the defection of Lulu, his general in Syria, who went over to Mowaffac at Wasit, carrying with him his whole force. There he was received with open arms, and aided materially in bringing to a close the Zenj rebellion. But a few years after, Lulu, despoiled by Mowaffac of his vast riches (they were, Lulu asserted, his only fault), returned a beggar to Egypt with but one attendant;—an apt example of the instability of the times, and (our annalist adds) just reward of ingratitude towards the master who had freed him. Not long after, Ahmed having ruled sixteen years in Egypt, and a considerable period in Syria also, died, and was succeeded by Khomaria, an unworthy successor to his Father's great name. A struggle followed for several years, between him and the Caliphate, for the rule in Syria and Mesopotamia, which, after many battles, left the state of things pretty much as it began.

---

[1] The scene is told with much pathos. The punishment which Ahmed made his son inflict on his evil counsellors is, however, so barbarous as to mar the effect altogether; and I have not ventured to translate it into the text. The truant son was commanded to cut off both their hands and their legs, leaving them miserable living trunks. One may hope that these things are exaggerated. But even worse things were in store for wretched Egypt under the Mameluke dynasty.

A.H. 256-279.

The Tulunide invites the Caliph to go to Egypt, 268 A.H.

Motamid forced to return, 269 A.H.

Death of Ahmed ibn Tulun, xi. 270 A.H. 884 A.D.

271 A.H.

A.H. 256–279.

The provinces.

Mosul and its surrounding districts, having been long harassed by Kharejite insurrections, and latterly by the encroachment of Egyptian generals, was now for a time regained by the Caliphate. But Alyite risings continued throughout the whole reign to disturb the Empire. Kufa was seized by one of these pretenders, who was defeated after some heavy fighting; this city, however, had now fallen from its pre-eminence, and ceased to be an element of much anxiety. Medina was attacked by a force headed also by Alyite rebels, and was again subjected to such outrage that for four weeks none ventured for prayer into the Mosque of Mahomet; and the City remained in terror till these unworthy descendants of the Prophet were driven out.

Hostilities with the Greeks in Asia Minor.

During the early years of this reign, the Kaiser, Basil, taking advantage of the distractions of the Caliphate, made inroads on the Syrian border, and as we have seen seized the fortress Lulu. In succeeding years, though opposed by the Paulicians who sided with the Arabs, the Greeks obtained other victories, in one of which an Arab general was taken captive, and carried to the Byzantine court. In later years the tide turned, and a series of fields were won by the Tulunide governor of Tarsus, who in the end, however, lost his life, shot by a ball from the walls of a town he was besieging.

Illness of Mowaffac, 278 A.H. 891 A.D.

Early in A.H. 278, Mowaffac, while engaged in a campaign towards the North, was seized with elephantiasis, and carried on a litter to Samira. He had long been the real ruler. Some years previously, Motamid had sought to appoint a Vizier of his own, but fled across the river when Mowaffac drew near; and so entirely did he succumb as, at his Brother's command, even to send the favourite he had but just nominated, to prison. When Mowaffac, therefore, fell sick, he resolved to transmit the substantial authority he possessed, to his own son Motadhid. This prince was a favourite at the Capital. On one occasion, claiming the government of Syria, instead of another to which he had been appointed, his Father was displeased; and having placed him under arrest, the City

A.H. 256-279.

was in uproar, fearing for his safety, till he was released. Now a similar feeling was abroad. As Mowaffac's end drew near, his brother Motamid was brought over to Bagdad from Medain, his enforced residence, by the Vizier; and the populace, apprehending that the Vizier had gone over to the side of the imbecile Caliph, rose in tumult against him. In point of fact, Motadhid was in some danger; but his friends succeeded in bringing him safely to his Father's chamber, by whom, thus upon his deathbed, he was formally invested with the same supreme power which Mowaffac had himself so long held and vigorously used for the maintenance of the Empire. Shortly after, he expired at the age of forty-nine.

His son Motadhid.

His death.

Motamid never regained any real power: in fact, he had often, both now and before, to struggle in penury with but a few dinars in his purse. In the year following his brother's death, he was obliged publicly to depose his own son from the succession, and recognise Motadhid as Heir-apparent. He did not long survive, having drunk himself to death in a night carousal, at the age of fifty years, of which he had been Caliph, though in little more than name, for twenty-three years. And Motadhid his nephew reigned in his stead.

Death of Motamid and succession of Motadhid, vii. 279 A.H. Sept. 892 A.D.

CHAPTER LXX

MOTADHID AND MUKTAFY

279–295 A.H. 892–907 A.D.

Motadhid, 279 A.H. 892 A.D. MOTADHID, already in possession of supreme power, continued as Caliph ably to administer the Government. Egypt returned to her allegiance; for Khomaria, tempted by the honour, gave his daughter in marriage to the Caliph with a great dower, and promise of a yearly tribute. He was shortly after murdered in circumstances little creditable to the morality either of himself or of Egypt. his Court. The country fell into disorder under his young son, who, after a few months' reign, was also assassinated; and another son, Harun, who succeeded, suffered things to go from bad to worse.

Khorasan. Samanide chief beats Amr Saffaride; sends him to Bagdad, 288 A.H. Khorasan begins to fade from our view. The rulers, even in the far East, were still glad to get their title accredited from Bagdad. But there was little virtual power beyond the limits of Irac. The Samanide house rose on the decay of the Saffaride, whose rule was now confined to Sejestan; and the Chief of the latter, Amr ibn Leith, taken prisoner by the Samanide, was by him sent to Bagdad; where, after remaining some time in prison, he was at last, by the tacit sign of Motadhid on his death-287 A.H. bed, executed. The Alyite dynasty, so long dominant in Tabaristan, was also swallowed up by the Samanide. The immediate authority of the Caliph reached eastward only as far as Rei; and even within that limit the powerful family of Abu Dulaf[1] had hitherto been more

---

[1] The same whose praises, sung by the blind poet, so irritated Mamun. *Supra*, p. 512.

A.H. 279-295.

or less independent; it was now, however, reduced by Muktafy the Caliph's son, so that the west of Persia continued still to acknowledge the Court of Bagdad. In Mesopotamia, the Caliph and his son were long engaged in a campaign against the Kharejites, still rampant from Mosul to Amid. In the end this region, which had long been disturbed, partly by rebel Bedouin bands, partly by the rivalry between Egyptian and Imperial generals, was for the time restored to order.

Mesopotamia.

Motadhid's administration.

Motadhid was a brave and energetic ruler. He was so tolerant towards the house of Aly, that when a heavy largess was sent to them by the Alyite prince of Tabaristan, he was not displeased, as his predecessors would have been; but only bade that it should be done openly. Towards the Omeyyad race he was not so just. He went, indeed, so far as to have them anathematised in the Public prayers. He had even a volume of their misdeeds rehearsed from the pulpit, and forbade all favourable mention of them in debate at the clubs and religious gatherings. Bagdad was scandalised at this treatment; and in the end the Caliph withdrew his abusive book. Motadhid was also cruel in his punishments, some of which are not surpassed by those of his predecessors. For example, a Zenj rebel, admitted to pardon, but afterwards found tampering with the army, was bound to a stake and, after being scorched with fire, taken down, beheaded, and the body impaled on the great bridge. The Kharejite leader at Mosul, who fell by treachery into his hands, was paraded about Bagdad clothed in a robe of silk (the wearing of which Kharejites denounced as sinful) and then crucified, crying aloud, "The rule shall yet be the Lord's alone, let "the unbelievers rage never so much!" And yet another of these Kharejites was "skinned alive," so says our annalist, "as you would skin a sheep."

Muktafy, 289 A.H. 902 A.D.

After a prosperous reign of nearly ten years, Motadhid died; and Muktafy, his son by a Turkish slave-girl, succeeded to the Throne. In command of Ricca at the time, he at once returned to the Capital, where he became a favourite of the people from his generosity, and for

A.H. 279-295.

Carmathians.

abolishing his father's subterranean prisons, the terror of Bagdad. During his reign of nearly seven years the Empire was threatened by various dangers which he bravely met and overcame. Chief was that from the Carmathians, a race of fanatics which had sprung up during the late reign, and of which mention will be made in the following chapter.

Egypt restored to the Caliphate, 290 A.H. 903 A.D.

In beating back the savage Carmat hordes which spread over Syria and besieged Damascus, the Caliph received substantial aid from the Egyptian army, under command of Mohammed ibn Soleiman. Afterwards this general, seeing the now helpless state of the Tulunide government, and the consequent disorder of his country, not only transferred his allegiance to the Caliph, but advanced with a powerful army to reduce Egypt itself, and restore it to the Caliph; while with the same object a fleet from Tarsus entered the Nile. As Mohammed approached Cairo, most of the leading captains went over to him, and left Harun with diminished forces. These again fell out among themselves, and Harun, in the attempt to quell the tumult, was killed by an arrow. Egypt thus restored to the Caliphate was ravaged by the invading force, and the grand works of the last twenty years destroyed. The Tulunide family, with all their property, were transported to Bagdad, and the dynasty ceased. Notwithstanding his great services, and the vast treasures he brought with him from Egypt, Mohammed was cast into prison, and tortured to reveal some part of the spoil he was suspected of keeping back. The banished captains of the old dynasty again returned to Egypt, and set up afresh a rebel government at Fostat; but they were beaten, and Egypt finally restored to its allegiance.

Harun killed, 292 A.H.

293 A.H.

Mosul, 293-4 A.H.

Mosul was again the scene of serious attack. The Kurds came down from their hill retreats in great multitudes on Nineveh. The government was at the time in the hands of a chief of the Hamadan family (founder of that house[1]), who had to draw for reinforcements on Bagdad, and with that help pursued the Kurds

---

[1] Arabs of the Beni Taghlib clan.

A.H. 279–295.

into Azerbijan, and at last restored order. The Samanide ruler of Khorasan was about the same time attacked by countless hordes of Turcomans, and placed in such danger, that, instead of being able to render aid against the Kurds, he sent an urgent appeal for help to Bagdad, which was read out from all the pulpits there, but with small result.

War with the Greeks, 285–6 A.H.

Throughout these two reigns, hostilities prevailed more or less with the Greeks, who were not slow to take advantage of the exigencies of the Caliphate. In 285 A.H. a Byzantine fleet was set on fire, and 3000 sailors decapitated.[1] But there were reverses also. Tarsus was closely besieged by the Greeks, and the governor taken prisoner. Still worse, Egyptian rebels, to spite the Caliph, induced the Tulunide governor of Tarsus to burn the Moslem fleet of fifty vessels at anchor in their port. In consequence the Greeks were able to ravage the coasts at pleasure, both by land and sea; carrying vast numbers away captive. War was kept up with various fortune. Ten golden crosses, each followed by 10,000 men, swept devastation and captivity along the Moslem shores; while, on the other hand, a Moslem fleet under a renegade Greek, and manned by negroes, ravaged the coast opposite Byzantium. There followed further fighting, till in the end peace was made and prisoners on either side exchanged or ransomed.

292 A.H.

294 A.H.

Death of Muktafy, ii. 259 A.H. 907 A.D.

Thus, after a stormy reign of between six and seven years, Muktafy could look round and find the Caliphate more secure than since the days of Motassim it had been. One of his last acts was, on the death of the Samanide prince, to recognise the succession of his son in Khorasan, and forward to him a banner mounted by his own hand. He died at the early age of thirty-three, and left the throne to a minor brother. But, before proceeding with the melancholy sequel of the Caliphate, some account should be given of the Ismailians, who arose about this time and materially influenced the future history of Islam.

---

[1] So our authorities, though one can hardly believe it.

CHAPTER LXXI

ISMAILIANS, CARMATHIANS, AND FATIMIDES

Alyite fanaticism.

EVER since the tragedy of the Kerbala, the Moslem world was exposed, as we have seen, to outbursts of fanaticism in favour of the house of Aly. Persian Shie-ism, with its mystic tendencies, stimulated the sentiment, while the decline of the Caliphate, and the disorder prevailing in consequence, offered ready advantage to pretenders. Hence the growing frequency of Alyite risings. The feelings thus abroad were now to assume concrete and permanent form.

Various mystic sects.

The numerous sects and schisms at this time developed, were all based on the sanctity of the line of Aly, and the survival in it of a divine authority. Some held to twelve of the line; others to seven, that being a number to which singular virtue was ascribed. Schools multiplied all over the land in which the mystic faith was quietly and cautiously taught, embracing such recondite doctrines as the formation of the universe by the divine Reason, transmigration of souls, immanence of Divinity in the Mehdy,[1] and the early expectation of his coming. The novice was initiated in such esoteric doctrines, under oath of secrecy, and became henceforward, soul and body, his leader's devotee. The teaching of the Mehdy, it was held, might supersede the Coran, the tenets of which were allegorically rendered ; and the changes both of dogma and ritual were so strange and sweeping that the Prophet himself would hardly have recognised the system thus evolved as in any respect his own. The superstition spread with marvellous rapidity over the whole East, and along the southern shores of the Mediterranean. It was no doubt held by multitudes in simple faith; but by designing men it was made a stalking-horse for the overthrow of Governments, and the reaching of power thereby. Still worse, its deluded votaries were led to believe they were doing God service in scenes of plunder and rapine more cruel and outrageous even than those of the Zenj.

---

[1] "Mehdy," that is the "Guide" or divine Leader of the day, as being in direct descent from Aly.

Ismailians.

In the latter half of the Third century A.H., there arose an enthusiast of this school, who propagated a system designed to weld all religions into a universal faith. It was to be the seventh and last religion of the world, under the Seventh in succession from Aly—the divine Mehdy, Mohammed son of Ismail. From his patronymic the faith is named the *Ismailian*. During the reign of Motadhid, a leader of this persuasion opened canvass in Irac and gained a great following both there and in surrounding lands. His name was Carmat, and after him the sectaries are called Carmathians. He appeared while the Zenjites were yet in the field, and offered to join the Reprobate with 100,000 swords; but unable to adjust the tenets of a common faith, they parted. A leader then arose in Irac, Zakaruya by name; he had two sons,—one called the "Sheikh," the other from a fancied divine mark upon his face the "Spotted,"—who spread rapine and terror over the land. The former was killed in an attempt to storm Damascus; the latter ravaged Syria, murdering and pillaging whereever he went; and yet, strange to say, he was prayed for in the pulpits of the wretched province as "the Mehdy "that was for to come"; and with him also was a cousin named *Modathir*, "the Veiled," an epithet of Mahomet.[1] The alarm was so great at Bagdad that, as we have seen, Muktafy sent the Egyptian general Mohammed, to attack the fanatic host, himself accompanying the army as far as Ricca. The Carmats were totally beaten, the "Spotted" with his cousin and some followers escaping into the desert. Discovered there, they were carried to the Caliph at Ricca, and thence sent to Bagdad, where, paraded on

Carmathians.

Their excesses, 290–1 A.H. 902–3 A.D.

---

[1] *Sura* lxxiv.

Their defeat and terrible punishment.

an elephant and camels, they were made a spectacle to the city. Kept in prison till the return of Mohammed with more Carmat captives, they were all beheaded after their legs and arms had been cut off. For the "Spotted," a death was reserved of exquisite cruelty. Scourged with a hundred stripes, his hands were cut off; then he was scorched and, when in the agonies of the fire, his head was struck off and raised aloft on a pole, amidst the shouts of the multitude, *Allah Akbar*, Great is the Lord! There were other scenes of the kind, but this may suffice.

Marvellous tenacity of these enthusiasts.

One marvels at the tenacity of this noxious heresy. Beaten here it suddenly reappears there, scattering havoc and outrage in its track. Men were everywhere in expectation, and mused in their hearts whether this pretender or that were the coming Mehdy. The leaders too often acted from low and corrupt motives, and were followed by marauding Bedouins who, no longer enlisted in the Imperial forces, lusted after rapine and plunder. But apart from unworthy aims of the kind there must have been some spiritual force behind to hold together such vast masses and nerve them for the dangers, as well as for the spoils, of rebellion.

Renewed outbreak, 292 A.H.

And so another year had hardly passed when—the Imperial arms being engaged in Egypt—outrages were renewed with even greater barbarity than before. Zakaruya, who had for years lain hid in a subterranean dwelling, now wrote to his people that a heavenly messenger had revealed to him the death of his sons, and that the Mehdy was on the point of appearing. They were to go forth to war, and on the day of sacrifice enter Kufa, where thousands would rise and join them.[1] Thereupon Syria, from one end to the other, was subjected to fire and sword, and every kind of licence. Urgent appeal was made to Muktafy, who sent his best Generals without success against them. Just then Zakaruya emerged from his hiding. He was received with divine honours by the

294 A.H.

deluded throng and carried veiled upon their shoulders as the Vicegerent of the Almighty. The Carmats were now filled with such wild enthusiasm that they routed the Caliph's hosts, slaying 1500, and striking terror into the heart of Bagdad. Zakaruya at last formed the diabolical design of lying in wait between Bussorah and Kufa for the caravans just then returning from Pilgrimage. The first escaped, but the village which connived at their deliverance was utterly destroyed. The second was overtaken, and few lived to tell the tale: even the women were slain, excepting those kept for a worse fate. The third was warned to hold on till Imperial succour should come: but the Carmats choked the wells, arrested help, and fell upon the multitude dying of thirst. Another butchery ensued; the Carmat women carried water round to see if life was left in any yet; and if anyone gasped for a draught, the *coup de grâce* was given.[1] Twenty thousand were left dead on the fatal camping-ground; and twenty million pieces plundered, part of the Tulunide treasure carried by way of Mecca with the pilgrim caravan for safety. But the days of the "cursed Reprobate" (for so, like the Zenj leader, he was now fitly called) were drawing to an end. A Turkish general, Wassif, sent with a great army, after two days' desperate fighting, discomfited the fanatic host and dispersed it with great slaughter. Zakaruya, taken prisoner, died of his wounds before reaching Bagdad, and the populace, eager for a cruel spectacle, had to be satisfied with the sight of his lifeless body. The fragments of the rebel army were pursued into Syria, where, still holding their leader alive, they for long carried on depredations upon Moslems and Christians alike, the pilgrim caravans of the latter to Jerusalem suffering equally.

---

[1] He quoted as a command from the Mehdy *Sura* xx. 55, where Moses appointed the feast-day for his meeting with Pharaoh.

Attack on pilgrim caravans.

In the following reign we come upon even more fearful outbreaks of the savage fanatics who still held the province of Bahrein. Early in the fourth century, their

---

[1] We met with the same savagery on the part of the women in the battle of Cadesiya, but then against the infidels. What adds point, if that were possible, to the inhumanity on the present occasion, is that the victims were of their own faith, and were returning from performance of the highest function of the Moslem worship.

Renewed outbreak, 307 A.H.

chief Soleiman was induced to make a diversion in favour of the Fatimide ruler in Africa (of whom more below); and thereupon stormed and sacked Bussorah.

Attack on Bussorah, and pilgrimage caravans, 312–13 A.H.

A few years after he surprised that unfortunate City again by night, and for seventeen days made it the scene of fire, and blood, and rapine. It was not till the approach of troops from Bagdad, that the Carmats retired laden with spoil and multitudes of captives whom they sold as slaves. The Pilgrim caravans were again the object of savage attack; successive companies treated with brutal cruelty as before; thousands plundered, slain, or taken captive. One caravan of 7000 was pursued

Kufa stormed.

and scattered close to Kufa; the city was stormed, and for six days subjected to like treatment as Bussorah. Soleiman had then the insolence to demand the government of Ahwaz, and being refused, spread his followers over Mesopotamia and Irac. The divine promise of victory inscribed on his white banner[1] waving over the fanatics, nerved them to beat back over and over again the Caliph's armies led by his best generals, and even to threaten the Capital itself. The affrighted inhabitants fled across the river to the eastern Quarter, and on one occasion to the hills beyond. Rapine and terror were thus the fate of the unhappy land for three or four years. At last suffering defeat, the fanatic host withdrew into

317 A.H.

Arabia; but only to renew their horrid outrages at Mecca. The Holy city was given up to plunder; and so little regard shown to the sacred places, that bodies of the slain were cast into the sacred well Zemzem. The Kaaba itself was robbed of its precious things, and to crown the sacrilege despoiled of the Black Stone, which was carried off to Hejer, and not restored for above twenty years. The Fatimide prince now interfered from the West to stay the scandal and ravages of the Carmats, which hitherto had been of service to him against the Caliphate. Soleiman returned to Hejer, and we hear little more of him. But the Carmats still survived. Some years afterwards they again attacked the Pilgrims, and plundered Kufa. After this they fell into dissensions; but they 325 A.H. must long have retained a strong hold of Syria, for in 360 A.H. we find them joining in a league with the Caliph to oust the Fatimides from that province; and the Fatimides were obliged to appease them by a yearly tribute. Some fifteen or twenty years later they are again mentioned in connection with the struggles that were prolonged for many years in Asia Minor and Egypt; and, strangely enough, it was a Carmat who ruled in Multan when, in 396 A.H., it was taken by Mahmud.

---

[1] It had this text as its legend;—We (the Most High) desire to show Our favour unto those who are weak in the land, and make them leaders and heirs (of the kingdom). *Sura* xxviii. 4.

Origin of the Fatimide dynasty, 280 A.H.

It will be convenient here to notice another branch of the Ismailites from which sprang the Fatimide dynasty of Egypt. The new transcendental doctrine was widely spread in Southern Arabia, and its votaries so grew in power that their leader gained possession of Yemen and Sanaa. This success induced one, Mohammed Alhabîb, who claimed to be the descendant of Ismail, to send an envoy to the Northern shores of Africa named Abu Abdallah. There, following up the canvass of previous missionaries, this emissary played a *rôle* of unexampled and romantic success. He found the Berbers so ready for the call, that he drew vast crowds after him, by their help defeated the Aghlab dynasty, and after much fighting gained possession of their Capital and kingdom. He preached the impending advent of the Mehdy, and to meet the expectation so raised summoned Obeidallah, son of his deceased master Mohammed. The adventures of this Mehdy in his flight through Egypt, and wanderings as a merchant with a caravan to Tripoli, form quite a romance of themselves. Suspected by the Aghlabites, he was cast into prison, and so remained till released by the victorious Abu Abdallah, who for a time professed to be in doubt whether Obeidallah were the veritable Mehdy or not. At last, however, he placed him on the Throne, 297 A.H. 909 A.D. and himself reaped the not unfrequent fruit of disinterested labours in the founding of a dynasty; for he was assassinated by command of the Monarch who owed

Fatimide dynasty. to him his throne but had now become jealous of his influence. Assuming the title, Commander of the Faithful, Mohammed, in virtue of his alleged descent from the Prophet's daughter Fatima, became the *Fatimide* Caliph of a kingdom which embraced both the dominions heretofore held by the Aghlabite dynasty, and the nearer districts of the Caliphate bordering on the Mediterranean. 306–9 A.H. He made repeated attempts to gain Egypt also, but was repulsed by Munis, Muctadir's commander there. 358 A.H. 969 A.D. Some fifty years later, however, both Syria and Egypt were conquered by his followers, and the foundations laid firm of the Fatimide Anti-caliphate. A literary duel then opened between Fostat and Bagdad on the purity of Obeidallah's descent from Aly and Fatima, on which the claims of the Egyptian dynasty rested. The heated debate was maintained long after its political moment had ceased. Renewed in modern times, the question hangs in the balance still unsolved.

Druses, *circa* 400 A.H. 1009 A.D. When the Fatimide dynasty had passed away, the Ismailite faith was banished from Egypt by Saladin, who was strictly orthodox in his profession. Another branch of the superstition, however, still curiously survives,—that namely of the Druses. This strange sect was established, early in the Fifth century, by the impious Fatimide, Hakim, whom the Druses were encouraged to worship as an incarnation of the Deity. Driven from Egypt by his successor, they retired to the heights of Lebanon, where they still look for the return of their Caliph, the divine Hakim.

Assassins. About the same time another offset of the faith was established by a Persian fanatic, which, under the title of Assassins,[1] long held in check the princes of the East, and earned for themselves an unenviable fame in the days of the Crusaders. They retired on the invasion of the Mongols, but still survive a small and now an inoffensive sect in the Lebanon and elsewhere.

---

[1] *Hashîshin*, pronounced Assîssin, or commonly *Assassin*. Curiously enough, they answered in character to the name that thus arose from quite another derivation, namely, the drug *Hashîsh* to which they were addicted. They were long the terror of the East for the treacherous use of the dagger, both for the fanatical ends of their sect, and also as hired assassins. The

Assassins (Hashshîsîn) of Syria have never entirely disappeared. Even at this day they are to be found in the Lebanon. Some representatives of the sect also exist in Persia, and even in Zanzibar; but since the thirteenth century they have become inoffensive. *Enc. Britt.* vol. xvi. p. 594.

CHAPTER LXXII

MUCTADIR, CAHIR, AND RADHY

295–329 A.H. 907–940 A.D.

Renewed decadence of the Caliphate.

WE return to the story of the Caliphate.

The stand made during the last three reigns to stay its downward progress at last came to an end. There remains little now to tell, but a weary and ungrateful history of weakness, misfortune, cruelty, and shame. And there being nothing either attractive or instructive, the remainder will be briefly told.

Muctadir, 295 A.H. 907 A.D.

Muktafy, being confined for several months to his sick-bed, intrigue had been for some time busy as to his successor. The choice lay between his minor brother whom the Caliph himself favoured, and a son of Mutazz. The Vizier, hoping for the more thorough subservience of the minor, carried his appointment. Though but thirteen years of age, this boy assumed the title of Muctadir, "Mighty by the help of the Lord," a sad misnomer; for even in manhood he was but a weak voluptuary, in the hands of women of the Court, and of their favourites. His five-and-twenty years' reign is the constant record of Viziers, one rising on the fall, or on the assassination, of another. Few weeks elapsed before the first Vizier was murdered by conspirators who placed the son of Mutazz upon the throne. But Munis, commander-in-chief, stood by his boyish Sovereign; and the Pretender, obtaining no support in the City, was with his followers slain. 296 A.H.

There had been war now for some years between the Moslems and the Greeks in Asia, with heavy loss for the most part on the side of the Moslems, of whom great numbers were taken prisoners. The Byzantine frontier, however, began to be threatened by Bulgarian hordes; and so the Empress Zoe sent two ambassadors to Bagdad with the view of securing an armistice, and arranging for the ransom of the Moslem prisoners. The embassy was graciously received; and peace restored.[1] Munis was deputed to pacify the border, and carried with him a sum of 120,000 golden pieces for the freedom of the captives. All this only added to the disorder in the City. The people, angry at the success of the "Infidels" in Asia Minor and at similar losses in Persia, cast it in the Caliph's teeth that he cared for none of these things, but, instead of seeking to restore the prestige of Islam, passed his days and nights with slave-girls and musicians. Uttering such reproaches, they threw stones at the Imam, as in the Friday service he named the Caliph in the Public prayers.

War with Greeks, who sought armistice, 305 A.H. 917 A.D.

Some twelve years later, Muctadir was a second time subjected to the indignity of deposition. The leading courtiers having conspired against him, he was forced to abdicate in favour of his brother Cahir; but, after a scene of rioting and plunder, and loss of thousands of lives, the conspirators found that they were not supported by the troops; and so Muctadir, who had been kept in safety by Munis, was again placed upon the Throne. The finances, always straitened, fell after this outbreak into so wretched a state that, spite of ruthless confiscation and resumption, nothing was left to pay the city guards with. A quarrel, stimulated by their rival demands, arose between the cavalry and infantry; the latter worsted, were most of them massacred, and the rest driven from the City. Things became so bad that Munis, thwarted

Disorders in the City, 317 A.H.

318 A.H.

---

[1] There are traditional accounts of the marvellous grandeur of the reception, and fairy-tales of its surrounding;—curtains of gold, gorgeous carpets, thousands of eunuchs, pages, elephants, lions, etc. The description also of a marvellous tree, with branches of gold, and birds of silver. "The leaves of various colours move as the wind blows, while the birds pipe and sing." Of course there is fancy in the tale, but it also shows that in proportion as the Ruler and his retinue fell from virtue into depravity and vice, the surroundings would rise into every kind of wanton grandeur and excess. See *R. Asiatic Society's Journal*, January 1897, pp. 35-45.

A.H. 295–329.

by the Vizier of the day in all attempts at reform, retired, and with his followers took up his residence at Mosul. Muctadir at last invited Munis to return, who loyally answered the call. But the foolish Caliph, as he drew near to Bagdad, was persuaded by his favourites, who dreaded the return of the Caliph's faithful supporter, to change his mind, and instead of welcoming him as his friend, to go forth with his guards against him. And so, clad in the Prophet's mantle, girt about with the sword Dzul Ficar, and holding the Royal sceptre, the wretched Muctadir issued from his palace, and was slain outside the city gate.

Muctadir's death, 320 A.H.

Wretched degradation of the Caliphate under Muctadir.

The long reign of this miserable Caliph had brought the Empire to the lowest ebb. External losses were of secondary moment; though even so, Africa was lost, and Egypt nearly. Mosul, under chiefs of the Hamadan line, had thrown off its dependence, and the Greeks could make raids at pleasure on the helpless border. Yet in the East there still was kept up a formal recognition of the Caliphate, even by those who virtually claimed their independence; and nearer home, the terrible Carmathians had been for the time put down. In Bagdad, Muctadir, the mere tool of a depraved and venal court, was at the mercy of foreign guards, which, commanded for the most part by Turkish and other officers of strange descent, were ever and anon breaking out into rebellion. Thus, abject and reduced, twice dethroned, and at the last slain in opposing a loyal Officer whom he had called for his support, it is no wonder that the prestige which his immediate predecessors had regained was lost, and that the Throne became again the object of contempt at home, and a tempting prize for attack from abroad. The people also were demoralised. Bagdad was no longer the centre of a vigorous population that might defend, and at times even govern, themselves. Contending in wild factions, they could redden the streets with blood, as they fought now over the interpretation of a text, and now, with the Hanbalites rising in tumult over the remains of the great Tabari, denounce him as a heretic, and refuse his remains the rites of burial.[1] But as for manhood, virtue, and power, these had altogether vanished.

Cahir, 320 A.H. 932 A.D.

On the death of Muctadir, the loyal Munis, whose only object in returning had been to restore security to his Master, now wished to place his son upon the throne. But the Courtiers, afraid that he might revenge his Father's death upon them, chose rather in his stead the late Caliph's brother Cahir, already mentioned as having for a few days held the Caliphate; and he proved a more miserable ruler even than Muctadir. With an outward affectation of piety, he went to every excess of cruelty and extortion. He even tortured the mother of Muctadir and his sons and favourites, to squeeze from them the treasures amassed during the late reign. Many fled from the tyrant's grasp. Conspiracies were rife at Court; and to anticipate the machinations of the treacherous Caliph, Munis and his friends endeavoured to place him under restraint, and failing in the attempt, resolved to dethrone him. The plot, however, came to light; and the opposite faction, having gained over the guards by bribes, imprisoned the conspirators, and appointed a new generalissimo (*Ameer ul Omra*, as he was now called) in Munis' room. The Caliph caused his wretched nephew, who was to have succeeded, to be immured alive; and the faithful Munis with his followers was, on the guards rising in his favour, beheaded. Cahir, thus relieved from immediate danger, broke out into such tyranny, equally against friend and foe, as to render his rule unbearable. A fresh conspiracy was set on foot, and the besotted Caliph, overcome at night by wine, was attacked in his Palace. Refusing to abdicate, his eyes were blinded, and he was cast into prison. Eleven years after he was liberated, and might then be

321 A.H.

Munis beheaded.

Cahir deposed and blinded, 322 A.H. 934 A.D.

---

[1] The verse that caused the uproar was simple enough:—"Peradventure the Lord will raise thee up unto a noble place." The contention of the Hanbalites was that Mahomet was here promised a place near the throne in heaven; while the others held that it referred to the rank of intercessor, and hence the heated strife. As to the historian Tabari, the Hanbalites were angry, because in his history he had not noticed Ibn Hanbal among the great jurists of Islam. Tabari, *b.* 224; *d.* 310. His friends had to bury him secretly by night.

A.H. 295-329. seen led about a wretched mendicant in beggar's dress and wooden sandals;—sad contrast to his high-sounding title, *Câhir billahi*, "Victorious by the grace of God," and meet type of the fallen Caliphate.

Radhy, 322 A.H. 934 A.D. The seven years' reign of Radhy son of Muctadir, who followed, was but a succession of misfortune. Praised for his piety, he became the mere tool of the Ameer ul Omra of the day. It would be unprofitable to detail the intrigues of his Court, or the treachery by which even the few provinces still remaining around the Capital fell into the hands of his professed servants. The authority of the Caliph, indeed, excepting in an uncertain and intermittent way, extended hardly beyond the precincts of the City. After one Vizier had been imprisoned by his enemies, and another had absconded in disgrace, Radhy fell into the hands of an able but cruel ruler, Ibn Raic, who held so absolutely the reins of government that his name was conjoined with the Caliph's in the public prayers. To enable him to combat with the provincial governors, who began to raise their heads in revolt all around, Ibn Raic called to his aid Bajkam, a chief from Deilem, with his Turkish horde. But after two years the intrigues and machinations of this wretched band became intolerable.

Bajkam, Ameer ul Omra, 326 A.H. The cruelties perpetrated are hardly credible. One who held the office of Vizier had his hand cut off; and still intriguing, his tongue cut out, whereof he died in prison. Becoming jealous of Bajkam, Ibn Raic designed to supplant him; on which Bajkam, hastening from his 327 A.H. camp, entered the City in force. Ibn Raic disappeared into hiding; and in his room Bajkam rose to the plenitude of power. Taking the Caliph in his train, he next year attacked the Hamadanite prince at Mosul, and gained advantage over him. But in his absence Ibn Raic, emerging from his hiding at the head of a body of Carmats,—for these were now drafted into the Caliph's 328 A.H. army,—seized the Capital. This obliged Bajkam to hurry back, and leave the Hamadanites independent as before. Indeed, it was only to them that the Caliphate now owed the defence of the northern border, which otherwise would have been at the mercy of Grecian inroad. Ibn Raic, on the approach of Bajkam, tendered submission, and receiving pardon, was given the government of Syria and Northern Mesopotamia. But for these he had to contend with Ibn Toghej, the governor of Egypt and founder of the Ikhshidite dynasty. Like others, appointed from Bagdad to the charge of Egypt, this officer had set up as independent sovereign, and ruled there, himself and his successors, for a quarter of a century.[1] After some fighting Ibn Raic was able to come to terms with the Ikhshidite, and so retained his command in the north.

Ikhshidite dynasty in Egypt, 321–50 A.H.

A new enemy had meanwhile appeared in the East, —the Buyide house,—which in a few years was to be supreme in Bagdad. The Buyides were sons of Buyeh, a prince in the hill-country of Deilem, and leader of a Turkish horde, engaged now on one side, and now on the other, in the wars between the Samanides and the Alyide rulers on the Caspian shore. Freed at last from such service, the sons, tempted like other adventurers of the day, turned their arms westward, and took possession of Fars. There coming in conflict with the outlying governors of the Caliphate, they passed on to Ispahan and Shiraz, and even threatened Wasit. Bajkam, alarmed at their progress, now took the field, and was on the point of gaining advantage over them, when he had to hurry back because of the treachery of one of his captains, who in his absence threatened Bagdad. And so the Buyides were left for a time, to consolidate their conquests all around.

Rise of the Buyides, 322 A.H. 934 A.D.

327–8 A.H.

Regarding Bagdad during this reign, we are chiefly told of the heated outburst of fanaticism and intolerance that still prevailed. The Hanbalites, supported by popular sentiment, carried things with a high hand. Forcing their way into private dwellings, they overthrew everything not in strict conformity with their tenets, emptied vessels of wine wherever found, broke in pieces musical instruments, pried into the details of trade and commerce, and set up in fact a kind of inquisition. Thus a professor of the Shie-ite

Fanaticism rife at Bagdad.

---

[1] *Ikhshid* was the title of the princes of Ferghana, one of whom took service under Motassim, and was grandfather of Ibn Toghej.

A.H. 295–329. creed, for holding transmigration, was impaled and eventually burned alive. A famous doctor also was badly handled for affirming some various readings of the Coran, of no apparent moment in themselves; and, notwithstanding that he submitted written recantation, had to fly Bagdad lest he should be torn in pieces by the angry mob.

Death of Radhy, 329 A.H. 940 A.D. Radhy died at the age of thirty-three. He is commonly spoken of as the last of the real Caliphs;—the last, our Annalist tells us, to deliver orations at the Friday service, hold assemblies to discuss with philosophers and divines the questions of the day, or take counsel on the affairs of State; the last to distribute largess among the needy, or interpose to temper the severity of cruel officers. And yet, with all this, he was the mere dependant of another. To outward appearance, indeed,—in the weekly presidency at the Great mosque; in the formal, though it might be but empty, sanctioning of successions in the executive; and in the semblance of a certain Courtly ceremonial,—he might still be taken for the Caliph. But beyond the shadow, there was little left at home. And abroad, even less. The East was gone; Africa and Egypt also, with great part of Syria and Mesopotamia; Mosul independent; Arabia held by Carmats and native chieftains; even Bussorah and Wasit in revolt. What was there but the Capital; and there, how little!

Radhy's poetry. Radhy was the last of the Caliphs whose poetry has been preserved. The remains, both in sentiment and cadence, are of a high order. "In them," Weil writes, "Radhy gives expression to deep religious feeling, and "to his sense of the instability of human greatness, and "the transitoriness of all things here below;—sentiments "of which the tale of his Successor, and indeed his own "surroundings, offer so apt an illustration."

Decay of Kufa. Kufa, as we have seen, was no longer a source either of danger or of material support. Gradually decaying ever since the transfer of the court to Bagdad, it had lost the power to disturb by its factious outbreaks the affairs of State, and, in point of fact, is seldom mentioned now.

CHAPTER LXXIII

MUTTAKY AND MUSTAKFY

329–334 A.H. 941–946 A.D.

Muttaky, 329 A.H. 941 A.D.

BAJKAM, Ameer ul Omra, was at the time of Radhy's death engaged in a campaign against Baridy, a Persian chieftain, who had already held the office of Vizier, but, like others, had since set himself up as independent ruler of an adjacent province, and was now even threatening Medain. Of such little moment had the Caliphate become, that Bajkam, on receiving tidings of Radhy's death, contented himself with despatching to Bagdad his Secretary, who assembled the chief men as well of Alyite as of Abbasside descent, to elect a successor. The choice fell on the deceased Caliph's brother Muttaky, who assumed the office after it had been some days vacant; and whose first act was to send a banner and dress of honour to Bajkam, a needless confirmation of his rank. Bajkam routed Baridy, but before returning to Wasit, where he now held his court, went out on a hunting party, and met his death at the hands of a band of marauding Kurds. The wretched Capital became the scene of renewed anarchy. The Deilem troops fell out with the Turks, and going over to Baridy, enabled him to retake Wasit and enter Bagdad as Ameer ul Omra. Fresh disturbances breaking out, he was obliged after ruling for a few weeks to fly, and was succeeded by Kurtekin, a Deilem chief. His tyranny, however, was so intolerable that Ibn Raic, then governor of Syria, at the Caliph's call, hastened to the Capital, and expelling Kurtekin, assumed supreme control. But Baridy had

Death of Bajkam.

A.H. 329-334.

Flies to Mosul, 330 A.H.

meanwhile repossessed himself of Wasit, and gaining over the Turkish mercenaries again attacked Bagdad, on which Ibn Raic persuaded the Caliph to fly with him to Mosul. Muttaky was handsomely welcomed there by the Hamadan princes, who organised a campaign to restore him to the Capital. But their ends were purely selfish; and so, regarding Ibn Raic as in their way, they assassinated him, and having added his Syrian government to their own, turned their ambition towards Bagdad. And thus it came to pass that before the close of the year, the Hamadanite chief, with the title of Nasir ud Dowla, advanced on Bagdad with the Caliph in his train, and after driving out Baridy, entered it in state.

Hamadan princes' short rule at Bagdad.

But however powerful the Hamadan chiefs were at home amongst their Arab brethren, and splendid their victories over the Greeks, they found it a different thing to rule at Bagdad. Arabs were no longer able to contend with the wild elements that dominated there. The foreign mercenaries, rank and file as well as leaders, had for long years cast off subservience and respect for Arabian chiefs; and even in the field, the Arab soldiery, discountenanced and cast aside, could nowhere hold their own against the well-organised Turkish forces. And so in less than a year, the Hamadan chieftains had to return to Mosul; for a Turkish general called Tuzûn,[1] having beaten Baridy at Bussorah, entered Bagdad in triumph, and was saluted Ameer ul Omra. But fresh proceedings against his enemy obliged Tuzûn to quit the Capital; and during his absence a conspiracy broke out which placed the Caliph in danger, and obliged him again to appeal to the Hamadan prince for help. Troops sent in response enabled him to escape; he fled to Mosul and thence to Nizibin. Shortly after, peace being restored between Tuzûn and the Hamadan chiefs, Muttaky took up his residence at Ricca,—a wretched fugitive in the city which had so often been the proud Court of his illustrious ancestors.

Tuzûn, 331 A.H. 943 A.D.

Muttaky escapes to Ricca, 944 A.D. 332 A.H.

There, under the surveillance of a Hamadan prince,

---

[1] By Weil, *Turun.*

Muttaky, who had now been many months a refugee from his Capital, bethought him of the Ikhshidite, his former governor of Egypt, and now its ruler. Appealed to, the Ikhshidite hastened to the Caliph, and offering splendid presents with humble homage, besought him to return with him to Egypt, warning him at the same time to beware of Tuzûn. But neither he nor the Hamadan princes had other object in offering the Caliph an asylum, than by possession of his person to gain a title to the contested province of Syria. And so Muttaky, distrusting both, threw himself, the warning notwithstanding, into the hands of Tuzûn, who swore with the most sacred oaths that he would render true and faithful service. Spite of it all, he soon after deposed him from the Caliphate, and had his sight destroyed.

Visited by the Ikhshidite.

Deposed and blinded, 333 A.H. 944 A.D.

The same day, Tuzûn installed the blinded Caliph's brother as his successor, with the title of Mustakfy, *For whom the Lord sufficeth.* The Buyide columns beginning now to hover about the Capital as vultures over their prey, Tuzûn, with the Caliph in his train, marched out to Wasit and discomfited them. The tribute due from Mosul being withheld, and the treasury in straits, Tuzûn, again carrying the Caliph with him, marched against the Hamadanites; but, friendly relations re-established, he returned. Soon after, Tuzûn died, and was succeeded by Abu Jafar, one of his generals. Bagdad now fell into a fearful state of distress. Supplies stayed by the enemies all round no longer reached the markets, and people were reduced to eat dogs and cats and even offal. Pillage and rapine rife, the mob were driven by starvation to plunder the shops of their remaining stores. Multitudes fled the city for Bussorah or elsewhere, dying in great numbers from want and weakness by the way. Abu Jafar at last, finding himself unable to control affairs, besought the aid of Nasir ud Dowla from Mosul; even offering, if he would come, to vacate in his favour the supreme command. But the Hamadanite arms were at the moment engaged on one hand with the Russians in Azerbijan, and on the other with the Ikhshidites in Syria. Just then the governor of

Mustakfy.

333 A.H. 945 A.D.

334 A.H.

A.H. 329–334.

Buyide Sultan assumes rule of Bagdad, Rabi ii., 334 A.H. 945 A.D.

Wasit surrendered that citadel to the chief of the Buyides, and joining him marched on Bagdad. Terror reigned in the City. Abu Jafar and the Caliph fled into hiding; but relieved of the Turkish garrison, which to escape the approaching conqueror evacuated the city and marched off to Mosul, both reappeared. The Caliph then received, with outward expressions of satisfaction, the Secretary whom the Buyide chief sent on before him to make terms of peace. He also expressed himself ready to embrace the Conqueror, and confirm his title to all the surrounding districts which he had overrun. Invited thus, Muizz ud Dowla entered Bagdad, and under the new title of *Sultan*, assumed the supreme command. The Caliph tendered, —as how could he else?—an abject submission to the Sultan, whose name, in addition to Mustakfy's, was now by his command stamped upon the coinage, and recited as that of sovereign in the Public prayers. In fact he gave in all round. It was all in vain. Muizz ud Dowla feared the Caliph as a creature of the Turks, whose return from Mosul he might at any time invite. There may have been cause. At anyrate, the Sultan took offence at an entertainment given by the chief lady of the Caliph's harem to the leaders of the Deilemites and Turks still remaining in the city, as if meant to gain them over to the Caliph's cause.

Mustakfy deposed and blinded, Jumad ii., 334 A.H. 946 A.D.

Mustakfy in vain excused himself as unconcerned with the feast. Three weeks followed without warning, when the Sultan, having arranged for the reception of an embassy from the East at the Caliph's palace, seated himself by his side, with his retinue in waiting. Suddenly two Deilemite chiefs rushed forward and offered to shake the Caliph's hand, who gave it, suspecting nothing. Catching hold, and throwing his turban round his neck, they dragged him by it to the Sultan's palace where (common fate now of dethroned Caliphs, for Muttaky and Cahir still survived in darkness) he was deprived of sight. He had been Caliph for little over a year. The City rose in tumult, and the Caliph's palace was plundered till but the bare walls remained. The tyrant had the lady's tongue cut out who had organised the hateful entertainment.

A.H. 329-334.

The fallen state of the Caliphate has made it no longer needful to notice passing events elsewhere, in the shaping of which the Caliph could have but little or no hand now. A solitary instance we find in which the authority of Muttaky was invoked in a matter which, spiritual in itself, led to an important result In the year 332 A.H., the Greeks carried their inroads so far as to beleaguer Edessa. The only hope of saving it was to surrender the precious relic, called *our Saviour's napkin*, treasured in the Edessa cathedral; which obtained, the Greeks would then retire. The lawfulness of its surrender was debated; and at last referred for decision to the Caliph, who summoned a court of jurists and doctors of the law. Permission was given, and the cession of the relic not only saved Edessa, but purchased liberty to a great multitude of Moslem prisoners.

Edessa saved by giving up a relic.

CHAPTER LXXIV

THE BUYIDE DYNASTY. THE CALIPHS MUTIE, TAIE, CADIR, AND CAIM

334–447 A.H. 946–1055 A.D.

Buyide dynasty, 334–447 A.H.

THE Buyides had every advantage on their side. Borne along by a brave Deilemite following, trained on the south-east shore of the Caspian in the protracted warfare between the Alyite dynasty and the Saffar and Samanide races, they spread rapidly over the provinces to the east of Bagdad, and at last, as we have seen, entered in triumph the Capital itself, distracted as it was by the rivalries of Turkish captains, wild licence of the soldiery, misrule, anarchy, and want. The only adversary at all likely to oppose them was the Hamadan house of Mosul, which without much difficulty could be held in check. And so the Buyides maintained their hold of Bagdad over one hundred years. But their rule was weakened by family quarrels, and by the Shie-ite tendencies of the race. For the Deilem troops as well as their Masters had imbibed those doctrines on the Caspian shore from the Alyite rulers under whom they served; while the Turkish soldiery, as well as the populace of Bagdad, were devoted to the Orthodox faith. The City was thus continually rent by dissensions ending in outbursts of violence between the two factions, which eventually paved the fall of the Buyides and entry of the Seljuk conquerors.

The material position of the Caliphs throughout the Buyide reign was at its lowest ebb. Abject dependants, they were often carried in their Master's train while fighting at a distance from the Capital. So inclined,

A.H. 334-447.

moreover, was Muizz ud Dowla, the first Buyide prince, to the Shie-ite faith, that he was only prevented from raising to the Caliphate a scion of the house of Aly by alarm for his own safety, and fear of rebellion, not in the capital alone, but all around. For the Caliphate of Bagdad, on its spiritual side, was still recognised throughout the Moslem world wherever the Orthodox faith prevailed, excepting always Spain. The Fatimide Caliphs, on the other hand, claimed spiritual supremacy not only in Egypt, but as Shie-ites contested the pulpits of Syria also, and on one occasion even of Bagdad. In the East the spiritual dominance varied, but, Persia and Deilem excepted, the balance clearly favoured Orthodoxy. The Turcomans were staunch Sunnies. The great Mahmud of eastern fame, held always a friendly attitude towards the Caliphs, and his splendid victories in the Indian empire were accordingly announced from the pulpits of Bagdad in grateful and glowing terms. The pages of our annalists are now almost entirely occupied with the political events of the day in the guidance of which the Caliphs had seldom any concern, and which therefore need no mention here. We shall notice only the few occasions on which we hear them spoken of.

Position of Caliphate under it.

Mutie, 334-63 A.H. 945-73 A.D.

The next Caliph, son of Muctadir, called Mutie or *Obedient to the Lord*, had long aspired to the office. Between him and Mustakfy bitter enmity existed, which led him to retire into hiding. When the Buyides entered Bagdad, he came forth from his retirement, and, establishing himself at the new Court, by his sinister influence contributed to his cousin's fall. When this occurred, and he succeeded to the Caliphate, the Sultan made over his cousin to him; and it was while under his custody that the wretched Mustakfy had his eyesight blinded. But neither did Mutie gain much by his subserviency to the new Rulers. He was no longer allowed a voice in nominating the Vizier. A mere pittance doled out for his support, the office was shorn of every token of respect and dignity. Shie-ite observances were set up, such as public mourning on the anniversary of Hosein's death, and re-

A.H. 334-447.

joicing on that of the Prophet's supposed testimony in Aly's favour.[1] On one occasion they went so far as to post upon the various Mosques, sheets inscribed with malediction of the early Caliphs, and even of Ayesha, Mahomet's favourite spouse. The City was exasperated by the insult, and the placards torn down by the infuriated mob. Such outbursts occurred from time to time; and after one of them, the Caliph, who had held office thirty years, and now suffered from paralysis, was forced to abdicate in favour of Taie his son.

Mutie abdicates.

Taie, 363-81 A.H. 973-91 A.D.

During the Caliphate of Taie, of whom personally, and of his official life, we hear next to nothing, Syria was torn by contending factions, Fatimide, Turkish, and Carmathian; while the Buyide house was split up into parties which fell to fighting among themselves. After holding the office eighteen years, Taie was deposed and cast into durance, with the view of gaining his property which was coveted by the Buyide ruler.

Cadir, 381-422 A.H. 991-1031 A.D.

In place of the deposed Caliph, his cousin Cadir, grandson of Muctadir, was chosen. Banished from the Capital for designs upon the Caliphate, he was now recalled and appointed to the office he had long desired, and which he was destined to hold for more than two score years. It was during his Caliphate that Mahmud of Ghaznie arose, threatening the West; and but for the dissensions that broke out in the family upon his death, the Buyide kingdom, paralysed by internecine war, would have been swallowed up by hordes of Turcomans. Of Cadir there is hardly anything told, excepting that he succeeded in establishing an orthodox doctor as Supreme judge, while the Buyide was content with a Shie-ite *Nackîb*, or "Leader," to determine cases for that sect. He died eighty-seven years of age, and was succeeded by his son. A.H. 334-447.

---

[1] Namely, 18th Dzul Hijj. The received tradition is that on that day, coming home from the Farewell pilgrimage, Mahomet gathered his followers at the pool Khum, and addressed them on their various obligations. Referring to Aly, he said,—"Whosoever loveth me, will choose Aly also for his "*Friend.* The Lord be with them that support him, and forsake them that "oppose him." Aly had just been appointed to command in Yemen, to the discontent of many, and to stop their murmuring this was said. The word *mowla* signifies both "friend" and "master," and the Shie-ites make the most of it in this latter sense. Aly himself referred to the words as in his favour, when, as Caliph at Kufa, he was contending with Muavia.

Caim, 422-68 A.H. 1031-1075 A.D.

During the first half of Caim's long reign, hardly a day passed in the unfortunate Capital without tumult and bloodshed between the opposing factions still embittered by religious hate. Frequently the City was left without a ruler; the Buyide, though styled "King of kings," being often obliged to fly for safety from his Capital. Meanwhile the Seljuk house arose; and Toghril Beg, with countless hordes issuing from the east, overran Syria and Armenia. At last he cast an eye upon Bagdad. It was at a moment when the City was in the last throes of violence and fanaticism. The chief officers also were at variance with one another. The Deilemite captain Basisiri accused the Vizier of making overtures to the Seljuks; while the Vizier accused Basisiri of seeking to supplant the Caliph by the Egyptian anti-Caliph. The populace rose against Basisiri, and the Buyide prince, Melik Rahim, at the Caliph's entreaty, sent him away in exile. Just then Toghril Beg, under cover of intended pilgrimage to Mecca, entered Irac with a heavy force, and assuring the Caliph of pacific views and all subservience to his authority, begged permission to visit the Capital. The Turks and Buyides were averse; but the Caliph himself was only too glad to give him leave. On this the great Conqueror's name was recited by the Caliph in the Public prayers; and a few days after, Toghril Beg himself,—having sworn to be true not only to the Caliph, but also to the Buyide, Melik Rahim, made his entry into the Capital, where he was well received both by chiefs and people.

Entry of the Seljuks, 447 A.H. 1055 A.D.

CHAPTER LXXV

BAGDAD UNDER THE SELJUKS

447–575 A.H. 1055–1180 A.D.

Toghril Beg at Bagdad, 447 A.H. 1055 A.D.

TOGHRIL BEG was in no haste to leave Bagdad, and it was not long before he found, in a riot of the populace against his wild troops, excuse for casting Melik Rahim into prison, and assuming in his own hands the government of the City. So ended the Buyide rule, a century of decay for the Caliphate, and of misfortune for Bagdad. The Deilemite soldiers were at once disbanded. Quitting Irac, they rallied round Basisiri, who had joined the Fatimide cause in Syria, and who soon waxed strong enough to rout a column of the Seljuk forces. Alarmed at the tidings, Toghril, after having rested a year in Bagdad, during which the Caliph in vain besought him to rid the city of his Turkish hordes, set out on a campaign to 449 A.H. Nisibin and Mosul. Returning victorious, he was met by the Caliph with crowns and dresses of honour, and saluted as "Emperor of the East and of the West." But in the following year, Toghril being called back by the revolt of his brother to Persia, Basisiri, at the head of his Syrian 450 A.H. 1058 A.D. levies, entered Bagdad and proclaimed the Caliphate of the Fatimide ruler of Egypt. The Grand Vizier of Toghril was taken prisoner, and, exposed in an ox-hide to the contempt of the populace, was thus hanged. Even Caim, abjuring his own right, was forced to swear fealty to the rival Caliph. The emblems of the Abbasside Caliphate, robes and turban, ancient jewels, and royal pulpit, were sent to Cairo, with Caim's formal renunciation of the

A.H. 447–575.

dignity.[1] But the hateful usurpation was not to last long. The supporters of Basisiri fell away as Toghril Beg again approached; and just a year after his entry the usurper fled, and Caim reassumed his office. He continued in honour with the Seljuk monarch, who sued for the hand of his daughter. At first refused, the Sultan obtained it in the end, but died shortly after the marriage feast. 453–5 A.H.

Death of Caim.

Alp Arslan's reign which followed, not only extended far and wide the spiritual dominion of Caim, but restored to Bagdad a security long unknown, and with it again the arts of commerce, peace, and learning. But we hear little of Caim, who throughout his prolonged Caliphate showed himself weak and aimless. He died two years after Alp Arslan, and was succeeded by his grandson.

Muctady, 468–87 A.H. 1075–94 A.D.

Muctady, the new Caliph, was honoured by the Sultan Melik Shah, during whose reign the Caliphate was recognised throughout the extending range of Seljuk conquest. Arabia, with the Holy cities, now recovered from the Fatimide grasp, acknowledged again the spiritual jurisdiction of the Abbassides. The Sultan gave his daughter in marriage to the Caliph; and on the birth of a son, dreamed of combining in him at once the Caliph and the Sultan on a common throne. But the dream was fruitless. The lady, dissatisfied, retired with her infant to the court of Ispahan. And the Sultan himself, becoming jealous of the Caliph's interference in the affairs of state, desired him to refrain and retire to Bussorah; but the death of Melik Shah shortly after, made the command inoperative.

Mustazhir, 487–512 A.H. 1094–1118 A.D.

Mustazhir succeeded his father. During his five-and-twenty years' incumbency there were stirring times; yet whether in the history of the fanatical strife at home, or of the startling Crusade of the Christians in the Syrian lands, the Caliph's name is hardly ever noticed. The Seljuk, whose rule was weakened by intestine broil, cared little for the interests of Islam. Towards the close of the fifth century A.H., the Christian arms spread all over Syria. A

---

[1] The robes, etc., were sent back by Saladin, but the pulpit is said to be still in Cairo.

A.H. 447–575. bootless attempt was even made by Raimond, with 300,000 Crusaders, to fall upon Bagdad by an eastern circuit, and

497 A.H. 1103 A.D. so inflict a deadly blow upon Islam; but the force was attacked by the enemy near to Tokat, scattered and cut

Capture of Jerusalem, 15th July 1099 A.D. to pieces, so that but few escaped. In the year 492 A.H., consternation was spread throughout the land by the capture of Jerusalem, and cruel treatment of its inhabitants. Preachers went about proclaiming the sad story, kindling revenge, and rousing men to recover from infidel hands the Mosque of Omar, and scene of the Prophet's heavenly flight. But whatever the success elsewhere, the mission failed in the eastern provinces, which were occupied with their own troubles, and moreover cared little for the Holy Land, dominated as it then was by the Fatimide faith. Crowds of exiles, driven for refuge to Bagdad, and joined there by the populace, cried out for war against the Franks. But neither Sultan nor Caliph had ears to hear. For two Fridays the insurgents, with this cry, stormed the Great mosque, broke the pulpit and throne of the Caliph in pieces, and shouted down the service. But that was all. No army went.

Mustarshid, 512–29 A.H. The Seljuks at this time, engaged by intestine war in the East, left Bagdad much to itself; and we are startled by finding Mustarshid, son of the preceding Caliph, once more seeking independence in the field. Risings in Irac were at this time rife. One was led by the famous but

Dubeis and Zenky, 516 A.H. unscrupulous general Dubeis, of the Beni Maziad; in the interest of the Sultan were Aksonker Buranky, and Zenky, hereafter the terrible foe of the Crusaders. Dubeis, now on one side and now on the other according to the interest of the day, joined a rebel brother of the Sultan in a raid upon Irac; when the Caliph and Turkish Prefect of Bagdad attacked and put him to flight. After plundering

518 A.H. Bussorah, he joined the Crusaders in their attempt upon Aleppo, and afterwards incited a young brother of the

519 A.H. Sultan to rebel and make a dash upon the capital; but the Caliph with 12,000 men, anticipating their movements, put them to flight.

A year or two later, the Prefect of the city, finding the Caliph unfriendly and striving to be free, begged the Sultan to come to Bagdad and set bounds to his aggressive attitude. Notwithstanding the Caliph's reclamation, and threat to leave his Palace and retire to the western suburb, the Sultan advanced; on which the Caliph sent an army to seize Wasit, but Zenky, then Governor of Bussorah, drove it back. The Sultan Mehmud then occupied the eastern quarter of the city, but still the Caliph refused to come to terms. Then there was fighting in the streets; and the Sultan's troops took to plundering the palace, when the Caliph (who at this time must have had large resources) coming up with 30,000 troops put them to flight. Indeed, had he not at the moment been deserted by one of his Kurdish chiefs, it would have gone hard with the Sultan. But shortly after, Zenky coming up with heavy reinforcements from Bussorah, so alarmed Mustarshid that he gave in to the Sultan and pacified him by an offering of money and arms. The Sultan remained the greater part of the year in Bagdad, where he left Zenky as Governor of the city and of all Irac. This distinguished warrior grew now into great power; he was given Mesopotamia with all its dependencies, including Mosul, Nisibin and Harran.[1] He then carried his army into Syria, and with an eye on Syria with the view of reducing the Crusaders, having made peace with Joscelin, nearly took Damascus and Emessa. His powerful name at this time caused great joy in Bagdad, where the people said that at last the Crusaders had found men worthy to meet them in the field. Towards the end of Mustarshid's life, however, Zenky fell into difficulty owing to the hostility of the Kurds and the Caliph. On the death of Sultan Mehmud he was recalled to the East by the designs of certain rebel members of the Seljuk house, stimulated by the Caliph and Dubeis. Here he

Hostilities with the Sultan.

521 A.H.

Career of Zenky.

522 A.H.

527 A.H. 1132 A.D.

---

[1] When before Nisibin, Timurtash sent a letter by a courier pigeon to tell the Governor that he would come to his succour in five days. The pigeon alighted in the camp, and Zenky substituted another letter with twenty instead of five days, and let it go into the town, which was so dispirited that it held out no longer.

A.H. 447–575.

Zenky, 529 A.H.

was worsted and obliged to fly before the Caliph, who pursued him to Mosul, and besieged him there but without success for three months. He now resumed operations in Syria and in 529 A.H. laid siege to Damascus, but was induced, partly by the bravery of the enemy, partly at the instance of the Caliph, to whom the Governor had made some concession in the public prayers, to relinquish the attempt. Recalled again by troubles in the east, he was unable to do much against the Crusaders till after Mustarshid's death.

Mustarshid murdered, 529 A.H.

Not long after, Mustarshid persuaded Seljuk, a disloyal scion of the Seljuk family, to join him in a campaign against the Sultan Masud himself. He attacked the Sultan's army near Hamadan; but, deserted by his troops, was taken prisoner, and pardoned on promising not to quit his Palace any more. Left in the royal tent, however, in the Sultan's absence, he was found murdered, as is supposed, by an emissary of the Assassins, who had no love for the Caliph. To remove the suspicion from himself, the Sultan threw the blame on the Caliph's old enemy, Dubeis, and had him put to death. Both Mustarshid and Dubeis are praised by their contemporaries as poets of no mean name;[1] and the Caliph, had he held his hand from the temptation of arms (for him a dangerous anachronism), might have built up the Caliphate by the peaceful arts he was better fitted to employ.

Rashid, 529–30 A.H.

Rashid, following his Father's steps, made another but equally unfortunate attempt at independence. To avenge his father's death, he insulted the Sultan's envoy who came to demand a heavy largess, incited the mob to plunder his Palace, and then, supported by Zenky, who was equally hostile because of the murder of Dubeis, set up a rival Sultan and levied war. The Sultan, Masud, hastened to the rebellious capital, and as the Caliph dared not venture outside the walls, laid siege to it. Bagdad, well defended by the river and its canals, long resisted the attack; but at last the Caliph and Zenky, despairing of success, escaped to Mosul. The Sultan's power restored, a council was held, the Caliph deposed, and his uncle, son of Mustazhir, appointed in his stead. Rashid fled to Ispahan, where he fell another victim to the Assassin's dagger.

---

[1] Dubeis is mentioned with distinction in the *Mocâmât Harîri.*

Muktafy, 530-55 A.H.

551 A.H.

552 A.H.

The continued disunion and contests of the Seljuk house afforded the new Caliph, Muktafy, opportunity not only of maintaining his authority in Bagdad, but of extending it throughout Irac. At the head of an organised force, he was able to defend the Capital from various attack. But he was ill-advised enough to support the rebellion of a son of the Sultan, who thereupon himself marched against Bagdad and forced the Caliph to take refuge in the eastern quarter, where he was only saved by the recall of the Sultan to quell a more serious rising in the East. Muktafy was, however, again received into favour by the Seljuk, who betrothed himself to one of his daughters. During this Caliphate the Crusade was raging furiously, and Zenky obtaining high distinction as a brave and generous warrior both from friend and foe. At one time hard pressed, he made urgent appeal for help to Bagdad, where, yielding to popular tumult, the Sultan and the Caliph despatched 20,000 men. But in the breast neither of the Seljuks, nor of the Caliph, nor yet of their Ameers, was enthusiasm ever kindled into further effort against the Frank Crusade.

Mustanjid and Mustadhy, Caliphs: 555-75 A.H.

Muktafy is praised by our annalists as virtuous, able and brave. During his Caliphate of five-and-twenty years, he conducted many minor expeditions against enemies in the vicinity, but none deserving any special notice. Of the next two Caliphs there is little else to say than that they continued to occupy a more or less independent position, with a Vizier and courtly surroundings, and supported by a force sufficient for an occasional campaign of but local and ephemeral import.[1] Meanwhile

[1] I may notice, however, a characteristic scene at the elevation of Mustanjid. One of Muktafy's wives wished a younger son of whom she was mother to succeed. She gained over many Ameers to her side, and had their slave-girls armed with daggers to plunge into the new Caliph as he visited his father's remains. He got scent, however, of the plot, and arming himself in mail, with a strong following, attacked the women, wounded some, drowned others, and placed the son and rebel mother in prison.

A.H. 447–575.

End of Fatimide Caliphate, 567 A.H. 1171 A.D.

Nurudin and Saladin were pushing their victorious arms not only against the Crusaders but against the Fatimides of Egypt. That Dynasty was at last extinguished, having lasted for two centuries and three-quarters. Their conqueror, Saladin, though himself an orthodox Moslem, dared not at the first proclaim the Sunnite faith in the midst of a people still devoted to the tenets and practice of the Shie-ite sect. But he soon found himself able to do so; and thus the spiritual supremacy of the Abbassides again prevailed, not only in Syria, but throughout Egypt and all its dependencies.

CHAPTER LXXVI

THE CALIPH NASIR, HIS SON AND GRANDSON

575–640 A.H. 1180–1242 A.D.

WE now reach an attempt to restore the Caliphate to its ancient *rôle* among the nations; it was but the flicker of an expiring flame. Nasir, "Defender of the Faith," not only held the Capital in strength, but extended his sway into Mesopotamia on the one hand, and into Persia on the other. Ambitious in his foreign policy, he looked to further conquest; selfish and cruel at home, he caused his first two Viziers in fits of jealousy to be put to death.

Nasir, 575–622 A.H. 1180–1225 A.D.

The grand object of his earlier years was to crush the Seljuk power, and on its ruins build up his own. For this, he fomented rebellion, and took the part, from time to time, of discontented branches of the Sultan's house. At last, the Kharizm Shah, Takash, at his instigation attacked the Seljuk forces, and defeated them, leaving Toghril, last of his race, upon the field. The head of the fallen monarch was despatched to the Caliph to be exposed in front of the palace at Bagdad. Takash, recognised now as supreme ruler of the East, conferred on the Caliph certain provinces of Persia, heretofore held by the Seljuks. In token of his loyalty, Nasir sent by the hand of his Vizier to the conqueror a patent of rule and a dress of honour. But by a stupid want of tact, the Vizier so irritated the churlish Turk, that he attacked the Caliph's troops and routed them. Thereafter hostile relations, or at best hollow truce, prevailed between the two for many years. The Caliph, to be rid of an obnoxious governor

Relations with the court of Kharizm, 576–90 A.H.

591 A.H.

A.H. 575–640.

of the Shah's, against whom he dared not levy open war, had him assassinated by an emissary of the Ismailites, who having dropped their Alyite tenets, but not the dagger, were now in favour at the court of Bagdad. The Shah retaliated by having the body of Nasir's Vizier, who died on a campaign against him, exhumed, and the head stuck up at Kharizm. Irritated at this and other hostile acts, the Caliph showed his vexation by treating with indignity the pilgrims who came from the East under the Kharizm flag. But beyond such poor revenge, he was powerless for any open enmity against a Potentate whose rule stretched unopposed from the Jaxartes to the Persian Gulf.

Kharizm Shah's advance on Bagdad, 612–14 A.H. 1216–17 A.D.

Mohammed son of Takash, exasperated at these proceedings, now aimed not simply to crush the temporal rule of the Caliph, but by setting up an anti-Caliph of the house of Aly, to paralyse his spiritual power as well. A council of learned doctors, assembled at Kharizm, accordingly deposed Nasir as an assassin and enemy of the faith, and nominated a descendant of Aly to the Caliphate, who was prayed for in public and his name struck on the coinage of the Eastern empire. Following up this act, Mohammed turned his resistless arms upon Bagdad. Nasir in alarm sent a distinguished envoy to plead his cause, but he was haughtily rejected, with the assurance that the Conqueror was about to instal the worthier scion of a worthier house upon his Master's throne. On this, Nasir bethought him of an appeal to Jenghiz Khan, the rising Mongol chief, to check Mohammed's progress; and against the pious reclamations of his court, sent an embassy to him;—the *Defender of the Faith* appealing for help to the Pagan head of a pagan horde! It would have been all too late, for Mohammed, the Kharizm Shah, had already taken Eastern Irac, and Bagdad lay at his mercy, when, by the opportune inclemency of an early winter, he was forced to return to Khorasan. The Caliph soon after found his diplomacy bearing evil fruit. The steppes of Central Asia were set in motion by Jenghiz Khan, and his hordes put to flight the Kharizm Shah, who died an

Nasir invites Jenghiz Khan.

exile in an island of the Caspian. But it had been well for the Caliph (as we shall see) if he had left these Mongol hosts in their native wilds alone. A.H. 575–640. 617 A.H.

Turning now to the Holy Land, we find that Saladin, over and again, when hard pressed by the Crusaders, urgently appealed for help to Nasir who, caring for little beyond his own aggrandisement, contented himself with sending a store of naphtha, with men to use it against the invaders in the field. To Aly, one of Saladin's sons, who in the dissensions of the family sought to recover Damascus, he promised help, but it ended in an idle play upon the name;—"Aly," he said, "on the Prophet's death had no defender; whilst now the Caliph himself is NASIR, that is the Defender of Aly."[1]

Nasir leaves Crusaders alone, 577–89 A.H. 1180–93 A.D.

There is little more to tell of Nasir. Besides his occasional conquests, he held uninterruptedly Irak Araby from Tekrit to the Gulf, of which he is described as having been a severe and oppressive ruler. There are instances, however, in which when appealed to, he interposed in favour of the weaker party,—though partly, no doubt, from the fear of too powerful antagonists. His long reign of forty-seven years is chiefly marked by ambitious and unscrupulous dealings with the Tartar chiefs, and by his hazardous invocation of the Mongol hordes, which so soon brought his own Dynasty to an end. But in his day, there was comparative peace at Bagdad; learning flourished; schools and libraries were patronised; while refuges for the poor, and other works of public interest, were encouraged.

Nasir's Caliphate.

His son and grandson succeeded Nasir, during the next eighteen years; but there is little said of them beyond that they were mild and virtuous. The Crusades still dragged on their weary course, while the heirs of Saladin were contending bitterly among themselves. The Caliphate, however, concerned itself little with the wars in Syria. It was kept in frequent alarm by the Tartar inroads. The Mongols came on one occasion as near as

Zahir and Mustansir, the two succeeding Caliphs, 622–40 A.H. 1225–1242 A.D.

---

[1] The Vizier of this prince was brother of our Annalist, Ibn al Athîr.

A.H. 575-640. Holwan and Khanikin, and on another even to Samira, so that the terrified inhabitants of Bagdad hastened to put their defences in order. But the danger for the moment passed off, and peace still reigned in the City. It was but the lull before the fatal storm.

CHAPTER LXXVII

MUSTASSIM, THE LAST OF THE CALIPHS

640–656 A.H. 1242–1258 A.D.

Mustassim last Caliph, 640–56 A.H. 1242–58 A.D.

IN the year 640 A.H. Mustassim became Caliph,—name vainly meaning *He that maketh the Lord his refuge*;—a weak and miserly creature, in whose improvident hands the Caliphate, even in quieter times, would have fared ill. Between the Chief secretary, an ambitious and unprincipled courtier, and the Vizier, bitter enmity prevailed. The Vizier, strange to say, was a Shie-ite; as such he is of course denounced by orthodox annalists, who even accuse him of seeking relief for his persecuted fellow-sectaries by treacherous communication with the Mongols. Others assign him a more patriotic *rôle*; and, indeed, we need not to travel beyond the imbecility of the Caliph and the demoralisation of his now shrunken kingdom, for the causes of impending ruin.

His character

Of Mustassim himself there is little to relate. As characteristic of his meanness, we are told that he appropriated the state jewels of the Chief of Kerak, who with difficulty obtained their partial restitution by proclaiming the Caliph's dishonesty before the assembled pilgrims at Mecca. His influence was felt, however, somewhat in Egypt. The Abbasside faith being now recognised there, the Sultan sought and obtained at Mustassim's hands recognition of his title and the insignia of investiture. The Caliph also repeatedly interposed to mediate between the Ruler of Damascus and the Sultan of Egypt.[1] It was

---

[1] When appealed to by the two rival claimants, he sent one of them a knife with jasmin decorations as proof of his good will, but the robes of installation

A.H. 640–656.

for his interest to help towards the establishment of a stable government, such as the Ayubite, in Syria, which might shield the Caliphate from its impending fate. But it was all too late.

Holagu's designs on the West, 653 A.H. 1255 A.D.

Meanwhile, as a tiger watching its prey, the Mongol was preparing from afar for the fatal irruption on the fair provinces of the West. Mustassim had been now thirteen years on the throne, when Holagu proclaimed a campaign against the Ismailians, and invited all to join in crushing the hateful race. The call met with no response from the Caliph. In the following year, the overthrow of the Ismailian power left the Conqueror free for his designs on the farther west. The state of Bagdad may be surmised at this time from its being the theatre of unceasing strife between the two hostile ministers already named, who accused each the other of treason. The Secretary went so far as even to rise against the Caliph himself, and, with the mob at his back, force his hand not only to declare him blameless, but to have his name recited in the Public prayers.

His advance on Bagdad, 655 A.H. 1257 A.D.

Just then, Holagu, who was resting at Hamadan, sent a threatening embassy to Bagdad. First, he upbraided Mustassim for having failed to aid in the campaign against the Ismailians, as the enemies of mankind. Now, therefore, he bade him to raze the defences of Bagdad; and commanded that, to learn his will, he must forthwith repair in person to his Court, or else send his Vizier and chief officers for the purpose;—which done, he was ready to leave Mustassim in secure possession of what he had. The foolish Caliph in reply descanted on the multitudes ready to hasten for the defence of the Vicegerent of the Prophet; and while declining to dismantle the city, sent an Envoy with presents and an otherwise soft reply. An immediate advance was the sole response of Holagu.

The helpless Caliph, persuaded by his Vizier, had

---

he declined to send till afterwards. He was opposed to female rulers. On one occasion, the Queen was elevated to be Sultan of Egypt, and the Caliph, when asked for his recognition, replied that if the Ameers could find no man equal to the duty, he would send them one.

A.H. 640-656.

already marshalled an embassy of submission, when the Secretary and excited populace forced him instead to send a letter of defiance to the Conqueror, reminding him of the Saffarides' fate, and of others who had dared attack the "City of peace." The warning was not without effect upon the superstitious Mongol, whose fears were now excited, and now quelled, by his astrologers. At last, satisfied of the safety of the enterprise, he made his Tartar hordes, from every side, converge upon the fated City. There the weakling at one moment wildly sought to gather troops for its defence; at another sent offers of a yearly tribute to his enemy. Ever and anon he looked for some ready fortune, such as had saved in like case his predecessors, and expected even the hand of Heaven to interpose. In the first month of 656 A.H. the Mongols routed a column which held Anbar, and pursued the few survivors to the western quarter of the City. Shortly after, Holagu himself, marching down the eastern bank, attacked the opposite quarter. In vain the Caliph sent his sons to plead for mercy: in vain he deputed the Vizier to seek for terms. All that could be wrung from the conqueror was safety for the chief inhabitants. Holagu had already stormed part of the city when he sent for the Commander-in-chief of the Caliph and his Secretary to arrange for the cessation of hostilities. They went, but, notwithstanding promise of safe-conduct, were put to death, with all their followers. Nothing remained for Mustassim but to go forth himself, which he did, the beginning of the second month, followed by his sons and the leading Citizens. They were received with outward courtesy. The Caliph and his sons were remanded to a tent; and the inhabitants warned to quit the City, which would then be given up to plunder. The wretched Caliph, following in the Tyrant's suite, was forced to witness the sacking of his palace, and there point out his hidden treasures with golden ingots of untold weight. After many days of rapine and conflagration, Holagu put an end to the pillage, and took the City for his own. Mustassim, now in the Mongol's way, was put to death in the

City seized and sacked, 656 A.H. 1258 A.D.

i. 656 A.H. Jan. 1258 A.D.

4th of second month, A.H. 3rd March.

Last of the Caliphs put to death.

A.H. 640–656.

14th ii. 656 A.H. 13th Feb. 1258 A.D.

middle of the second month, 656 A.H., with all the members of the house on whom hands could be laid. And so, suffering a fate similar to that which five centuries before it had itself inflicted on the Omeyyads, the Abbasside dynasty came to a violent and untimely end.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE SO-CALLED CALIPHATE UNDER THE MAMELUKES OF EGYPT

659-926 A.H. 1261-1520 A.D.

Mustansir, the Egyptian Caliph, 659 A.H. 1261 A.D.

THE Caliphate, long in hopeless decrepitude, had now disappeared, and there remained no possibility of its revival. But a shadow survived in Egypt,—a race of mock-Caliphs, having the name without the substance; a mere spectre as it were. Shortly after his accession to the throne, Beibars, hearing that a scion of Abbasside descent survived in Syria, conceived the design of setting him up as Caliph, and of receiving at his hands a spiritual blessing and title to the Sultanate. Sought out from his hiding, the Abbasside was brought to Cairo. At his approach, the Sultan with his Court went forth in pomp to meet him. Even the Jews and Christians had to follow in the train, bearing the Book of the law, and the Evangel, in their hands. Soon after this, Mustansir Caliph-nominate, robed in gorgeous apparel, girt with the sword of State and mounted on a white steed, was installed in the office, and sworn fealty to by Beibars, his Ameers, and the people; which function ended, there was read from the pulpit a pompous patent by the Caliph, conferring on Beibars the sovereign title, and impressing upon him the duty of warring for the faith, and other obligations which Mustansir now devolved upon him. Then, with sound of trumpet and shouts of joy, the Royal procession wended its way through the streets back to the Palace;—the Caliph following the Sultan on horseback,—all the rest on foot.

A.H. 659–926. His attempt on Bagdad. A few months later, Beibars resolved to reinstate his so-called Caliph in Bagdad, and accompanied him for this end to Damascus, with an army. There, however, the Mosul chiefs, who were to have joined the expedition, warned Beibars of possible danger to himself from a resuscitated Caliphate; and so, withdrawing from the enterprise, the Sultan suffered his *Protégé* to pursue his march with a diminished following, composed chiefly of Bedouin clans. Killed in battle, 660 A.H. 1262 A.D. The Mongol governor of Bagdad met the force at Hit, defeated the Caliph, and left him dead upon the field. So ended Mustansir, his high title of the *Heavenly Conqueror* notwithstanding.

Line of nominal Caliphs. 661–926 A.H. 1263–1520 A.D. The following year, Beibars secured another scion of Abbasside descent, and installed him as Caliph, but now on an altogether different footing,—that, namely, of a priestly attendant at his Court, or as we might say a high Ecclesiastic, to give at each succession his benediction and formal title to the throne, and also to lead the Public prayers. A mere creature of the Court, he was lodged, more or less under surveillance, in the citadel, and occupied a quite dependent, and in the main servile, place.

Their position and functions. The succession of such Egyptian Caliphs was maintained unbroken in the same line, on the nomination of the Sultan of the day, throughout the dynasty of the Mamelukes, which for two centuries and a half forms one of the most painful episodes of tyranny and bloodshed in the history of the world. During this long period we hear little of these Caliphs, excepting in so far as it devolved upon them to enthrone each new Sultan, and validate his title with the sanction, as it were, of the Moslem church. The Caliph also presided at the public prayers, in which his name was pronounced after that of the reigning Monarch. Beyond this, the notices are sparse and rare, and for the most part unimportant. Here we read of a Caliph carried in the Sultan's train to witness his conquests, or perchance with him to be taken captive by the enemy; anon we hear of another imprisoned by his Sovereign, or it may be deposed and exiled for inter-

A.H. 659-926.

fering in the affairs of State, or conspiring against the throne. But once, we find a Caliph himself elevated to the Sultanate; not, however, in virtue of his office, and but for half a year. Now he is preaching a holy war against the Mongols or Osmanlies; again he is employed in the more fitting task of mediating peace, or heading a procession of Moslems, Jews, and Christians, each holding aloft their scriptures, and praying for deliverance from the plague. In the eighth century of the Hegira, the Caliph, in company with the Sultan, received a deputation bearing precious gifts, from Mohammed son of Toghluk, who prayed for a patent of investiture from him, and for the mission of a Doctor of Abbasside lineage to instruct his Indian subjects in the faith. But, whether in honour or in neglect, we seldom find the so-called Caliph, throughout these 260 years, other than the tool and servant of the Ruler of the day.

Rise of the Osmanlies,

But a new power now rose in the East, which was soon to crush the Mameluke dynasty, that namely of the Osmanlies.[1] Like other hordes that overspread the West, these, in the seventh century of the Hegira, issued from the steppes of Central Asia beyond the Caspian. In the eighth century they achieved the conquest of Asia Minor, and eventually crossing the Bosphorus, planted the crescent on the walls of Byzantium.

Who conquer the Mamelukes, 922 A.H. 1516 A.D.

After a long struggle on the plains of Syria, the Mameluke arms finally gave place to the Osmanly. In the year 922 A.H., on the fateful field of Merj Dabik, the Egyptian troops suffered defeat, and Kansuweh, the last but one of the Mamelukes, was left on the field. The remnants fled to Damascus; but the Caliph Mutawakkil, who had followed in Kansuweh's train, waited on Selim the conqueror at Aleppo, and was by him courteously received. Tumanbeg, the last of the Egyptian dynasty, vainly endeavoured to resist the advance of his enemy, whose offers of peace were rejected On the Egyptian plain of Ridaniah his troops were finally defeated, about

---

[1] So called from Othman (pronounced in the West *Osman*), son of Ertogral, who settled in Asia Minor in the latter half of the seventh century, A.H.

Selim enters Cairo, i. 923 A.H. Jan. 1517 A.D.

the close of 923 A.H.; and on the first days of the following year, Selim made his triumphal entry into Cairo, with the Caliph in his train. There Mutawakkil used his influence with the Conqueror to stay the tumult and rapine raging in the city, and to save the Mameluke chiefs, of whom some thousands fell victims to Osmanly hate. The Sultan, who had fled across the Nile, was betrayed by a Bedouin chief, whose protection he had sought, and put to death.

The Caliph carried to Constantinople, 923 A.H. 1517 A.D.

Imprisoned, 926 A.H. 1520 A.D.

Resigns office into Sultan's hands.

Thus came to an end the dark and hateful Mameluke rule. Selim rested eight months in Cairo, abandoning himself to a course of dissipation, of which even a Mameluke might have been ashamed. He then returned to Constantinople, and with other Egyptians carried Mutawakkil also with him. There at first he was held as Caliph in high honour and esteem; but this he gradually forfeited by a graceless and unworthy life. Two or three years later, convicted of the misappropriation of property committed to his trust in Egypt, he was cast into confinement in the fortress of Saba Kuliat. Selim's successor, Soleiman, set him at liberty, and allowed him to return to the Capital, where he lived for a time on a miserable pittance. Shortly after, he resigned his rights into the hands of the Osmanly monarch, and retired into Egypt. We hear no more of him but that he joined a rising there 929 A.H., and died in the year 945. Thus ended the last shadow of the Abbasside Caliphate.

Claim of Osmanly Sultans to the title.

In virtue of Mutawakkil's cession of his title, the Osmanly Sultans make pretension not only to the sovereignty of the Moslem world, but to the Caliphate itself,—that is, to the spiritual, as well as political, power held by the Successors of the Prophet. Were there no other bar, the Tartar blood which flows in their veins would make the claim untenable. Even if their pedigree by some very flattering fiction could be traced up to Coreishite stock, the claim would be but a fond anachronism. The Caliphate ended with the fall of Bagdad. The illusory resuscitation by the Mamelukes was a lifeless show; the Osmanly Caliphate, a dream.

CHAPTER LXXIX

REVIEW

The Omeyyad, better than the Abbasside, dynasty.

In gathering up the more important points of this history, it is to me clear that the palmiest days of Islam, after those of Abu Bekr and Omar, were the Omeyyad. Muavia and Welid are not eclipsed by either Harun or Mamun. The tendency of the annals on which we are dependent, written as they were under the influence of Abbasside supremacy, is to exalt that dynasty at the expense of the Omeyyad. Still, with all its adventitious colouring, the Abbasside reign pales before the glory of the Omeyyad which, by its conquests, laid broad the foundations of Islam in the East and in the West. Moreover, the wholesale butcheries, cold-blooded murders, and treacherous assassinations, which cast a lurid light on the court of Saffâh and his successors, find, as a whole, no counterpart among the Omeyyads. And if we regard the environment of the Throne, although some of the Omeyyads were dissolute to the last degree, and sometimes cruel also, I should incline to strike the balance, even as regards morality, in favour altogether of Damascus. The history of the Abbassides can bring nothing to compare with the exemplary lives of Omar II, or of Hisham; and, whether from the point of natural law, or of Moslem obligation, the scandals of Bagdad without doubt cast into the shade anything that can be charged against Damascus.

Arab support the secret of Omeyyad greatness.

The chief reason for the superiority of the Omeyyads was the manly, frugal, and hardy habit of the Arab nation on whom they leant. These formed the main staple of their court, their ministers, their generals and associates. Conquest and spoil of war had already heated them, long before their fall, to luxurious living and voluptuous indulgence But even so, the love of desert life, indigenous in the Arab, was to some extent corrective of the laxity and demoralisation now creeping over the Moslem world. Under the Abbassides all was changed. Chief commands, both civil and military, fell rapidly into the hands of Turkish and Persian adventurers. The Arabs, too, in rank and file, were as a rule disbanded; and the Imperial forces recruited from the tribes of Central Asia or from the Berbers of the West. And so the Arabs,—those that yet maintained their simplicity and vigour uncontaminated by city life,—retired to the Desert; ready, instead of as heretofore the prop and pillar of the Caliphate, to follow any outlaw, Zenj or Carmat, appealing to their innate love of rapine, lawlessness, and plunder.

Influence of Persia.

The influence of Persia affected the spiritual, intellectual, and philosophical development of the Nation. While, on the one hand, it enervated and tended to demoralise the "City of Peace," on the other, with the help of Greece, it introduced the era of science, philosophy, and art, which formed the glory of Mamun and his immediate successors, and overshadowed the more substantial, though less lustrous grandeur of the Omeyyad line. Persian influence was also strongly in favour of Shie-ite doctrine and transcendental philosophy. The countries in which Arabs mostly spread and settled, and where consequently Arab sentiment most prevailed, are still those devoted to the Orthodox faith as set forth by its four great Doctors. Where there has been inclination to diverge, it has been, not in the direction of Alyite doctrine, but of the Kharejite schism,—that namely which takes its stand on the simplicity of the faith as first delivered by the Prophet. Revivals follow a corresponding course. Amongst the Orthodox, the quickened spirit shows itself in implicit return to the letter of the Coran; in the protest against forms and superstitions inconsistent with the sacred text; in outbursts of zeal to "fight in the "ways of the Lord"; and generally, in a tendency (as amongst the Wahabies) towards the ancient tenets of

Shie-ites and Orthodox.

Kharejite theocracy. Among the Shieas, on the other hand, the spirit of revival breaks out in a wild and mystical devotion, Soofee or Motazelite; and in the profane extravagancies of the divine Imamate or other emanation of the Deity. Persia remains the only important nation devoted to the Shiea faith. In India, the Emperors, being of Turkish blood, were generally of the Sunnie faith. They encouraged the immigration of vast crowds of Arabs from their native soil, especially from the Holy cities, who were strictly orthodox; and so throughout Hindustan the Soonnie has always overshadowed the Shiea.[1]

Bitter feeling between the two.

Between Turkey and Persia there is also a broad distinction in respect of tolerance. The Osmanlies, notwithstanding close contact with enlightened nations, are, in virtue of their orthodoxy, intolerant of the least divergence from the faith; while Persia, following in the wake of the Motazelite Caliphs, is less impatient of other creeds, and more amenable to outer influence.[2] In other respects, too, the ancient sentiment dividing Soonnie and Shiea is as bitter now as at the time when Aly cursed Muavia, and Muavia cursed Aly, in the daily Public service.[3] The hopeless schism has tended to slacken the progress of Islam, and abate its aggressive force. Thus recently, when a deadly blow was aimed at the head of the Moslem empire on this side the Bosphorus, the sectarians of Persia, through hate and jealousy of the Soonnie creed, declined to rally round the banner of the Crescent; and, indeed, so far as any help or sympathy from Shieas went, Islam might have been blotted out of Europe altogether. The Soonnie scorns the Shie-ite;

---

[1] *Soonnies* are those who hold by the *Sunnat*, or precedent, established by the practice of Mahomet, as handed down by tradition. They also recognise the title of the first three Caliphs, which the *Shieas* deny.

[2] The bigotry of the Persians appears mostly in matters of purification, remnants perhaps of their ancient faith. Baths and Mosques are polluted by the presence of an infidel. Curious, also, that the Persians to this day curse Mamun as the poisoner of Aly-ridha, his son-in-law, and use his name as a term of abuse. See above, p. 503.

[3] P. 286.

and the Shie-ite in his turn spits on the graves of those great Caliphs, Omar and Abu Bekr, to whom he owes it that Islam spread thus marvellously, nay, even that it survived the birth.

Islam stationary.

The Islam of to-day is substantially the Islam we have seen throughout this history. Swathed in the bands of the Coran, the Moslem faith, unlike the Christian, is powerless to adapt itself to varying time and place, keep pace with the march of humanity, direct and purify the social life, or elevate mankind. Freedom, in the proper sense of the word, is unknown; and this apparently, because in the body politic, the spiritual and the secular are hopelessly confounded. Hence we fail of finding anywhere the germ of popular government or approach to free and liberal institutions. The nearest thing to such was the brotherhood of Islam; but that, as a controlling power, was confined to the Arab race, and, with its dominancy, disappeared. The type and exemplar of Moslem rule is the absolute and autocratic monarch alternating at times with the licence of lawless soldiery. The only check upon the despot is the law of the Coran, expounded by the learned, and enforced by the sentiment, or it may be by the uprising, of the nation.

Domestic institutions.

Nor has there been any change in the conditions of social life. Polygamy and servile concubinage are still as ever the curse and blight of Islam. By these may the unity of the household at any time be broken; the purity and virtue weakened of the family tie; the vigour of the upper classes sapped; and the Throne itself liable to doubtful or contested succession. As to female slavery the Moslem will not readily abandon an indulgence recognised by his scripture. Its influence on the master is really more to be deprecated than on the wretched subject of the institution. However much domestic slavery is ameliorated by the kindly influences which in Moslem lands surround it, still the licence of servile concubinage fixes its withering grasp with more damaging effect on the owner of the slave than on the slave herself.

Divorce.

Hardly less evil is the one-sided power of divorce, at the mere word and will of the husband. Hanging over every household like the sword of Damocles, it must affect the tone of society at large; for, even if seldom put in force, it cannot fail, as a potential influence, to weaken the marriage bond and to lower the dignity and self-respect of woman.

The veil.

Nor is it otherwise with the Veil, and such domestic injunctions of the Coran as exclude woman from her legitimate place and function in social life. The exclusion may, indeed, be little loss to her. But by this unreasonable law, mankind at large, beyond the Harem's threshold, loses the grace and brightness of the sex, and purifying influence of their presence. Hence the cheerless aspect of Moslem outdoor life, and the drear austerity of their social gatherings. Opinion may differ as to the interdict on games of chance, and even the moderate use of wine. The double prohibition has no doubt tended to aggravate the gloom and gravity we speak of; but it may gladly be admitted that the absence of intemperance,—though with too frequent exception (as in this history we have seen) in the upper classes,—is a spectacle in Mahometan lands much to be commended.

Immobility of Islam.

The institutions just noticed form an integral part of the teaching of Islam. They are bound up in the charter of its existence. A reformed faith that should question the divine authority on which they rest, or attempt by rationalistic selection or abatement to effect a change, would be Islam no longer. That they tend to keep the Moslem nations in a backward, and in some respects barbarous, state, cannot be doubted. It is still true that, as at Damascus, Bagdad, and Cordova, an era of great prosperity has at times prevailed. Commerce and speculation (the law of usury notwithstanding) were at such times advanced; the arts of peace were cultivated; national prejudice was to some extent lessened, and liberality of sentiment promoted, by travel and intercourse with other peoples; while literature, science, and philosophy were prosecuted with marvellous success. But it was all short-lived, because civilisation, not penetrating the family, was superficial. It failed to leaven domestic life. The cankerworm of polygamy, divorce, servile concubinage, and the veil, lay at the root. And society, withering under the influence of these, relapsed into semi-barbarism again.

How far the Creed is responsible for the dark spots in this history.

Throughout this work we have often met with virtue and nobility, and acknowledged them gladly, whether in places high or low. But it has also been a duty, especially in the latter half of the volume, to thread our painful way in labyrinths of bloodshed and iniquity, and through purlieus of Courts the sink of profligacy, treachery, and vice. It may be difficult to say how far the tree is here to be judged by the fruit; in other words, what of all this is due to the creed, and what to other causes, and even in spite of the creed. But, this difficulty notwithstanding, the conclusion can scarcely fail to force itself upon the impartial reader, that much of the dark retrospect is legitimate result of the laws and institutions just described. In one respect, indeed, there is no room for doubt; and that is in respect of intolerance and religious warfare. It is by direct command of his Master that the Moslem fights against the Jew and Christian "until they pay "tribute with the hand, and are humbled"; and it is by a like command that he attacks the Heathen even to the bitter end. "Fight against the Idolaters," is the command which the Moslem holds divine,—"Wheresoever "ye find them; take them captive, besiege them, and lie "in wait for them in every ambush." If Christian nations have too often drawn the sword in propagation of their faith, it was in direct contravention of their Master's word,—"If My kingdom were of this world, then would "My servants fight; . . . but now is My kingdom not "from hence." Far different is the Moslem's case. Tribes and peoples for ages rushed into the battlefield, fulfilling what they believed their Maker's law "to fight in the ways of the Lord"; and as its immediate effect, the world was drenched in blood from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea, and multitudes of men and women taken captive, and as such held in slavery. Yet with all this, how true has come the Saviour's other word,—"All they that take "the sword shall perish with the sword." At last the Crescent wanes before the Cross.

Decline of political status.

For now the political ascendency of the faith is doomed. Every year witnesses a sensible degree of subsidence. In the close connection of the spiritual with the civil power, this cannot but affect the prestige of the religion itself; but nevertheless the religion maintains, and will no doubt long continue to maintain, its hold upon the people singularly unimpaired by the decline of its political supremacy.

The Moslem world stationary.

As regards the spiritual, social, and dogmatic aspect of Islam, there has been neither progress nor material change. Such as we found it in the days of the Caliphate, such is it also at the present day. Christian nations may advance in civilisation, freedom, and morality, in philosophy, science, and the arts, but Islam stands still. And thus stationary, so far as the lessons of the history avail, it will remain.

INDEX

ABBAS, Mahomet's uncle, prays for rain, 165, 167 ; 299, 322 *note* 1, 390, 420.
Abbas, son of Mamun, 509, 515, 519, 520.
Abbas, brother of Yezid III, 413, 414.
Abbasa, Harun's sister, 483.
Abbassides, the, 185 *note*, 223, 240 *note*, 305, 320, 322, 358, 367, 383, 394, 395, 399, 409, 419, 424, 426, 427, 432, 435 *sqq.*, 461, 463, 464, 501, 584, 585, 590, 598, 603 *sqq.*
Abd al Aziz, brother of Abd al Melik, 357, 368, 372, 379.
Abd al Aziz, son of Musa, 372, 373 and *note*, 376.
Abd al Melik (son of Merwan), 330 *note* ; Caliph, 334 ; 341 ; murders Amr ibn Said, 342 ; his war against Musab, 343 ; orders an attack on Mecca, 345 ; universally recognised as Caliph, 347 ; his son Welid proclaimed heir-apparent, 357 ; death and character, 357, 358 ; his children, 358 *note*.
Abd al Rahman (Abderame), 390, 408, 435 *note*.
Abd al Rahman, son of Abu Bekr, 318 and *note*.
Abd al Rahman, grandson of Hisham, 463, 464.
Abd al Rahman, one of the Prophet's councillors, 83, 132, 166 *note*, 194, 199, 200, 204, 205 ; chooses Othman for Caliph, 207 ; 208 and *note* 2, 224 *note* 1, 235.
Abdallah (*see* Ibn Zobeir).
Abdallah, brother of Abul Abbas, 431 *note*, 432, 462, 463.
Abdallah, uncle of Abul Abbas, 431, 432, 441, 448 *sqq.*, 452, 453.
Abdallah, Coteiba's brother, 362.
Abdallah, son of Harun (*see* Mamun).
Abdallah, son of Hasan, 395 *note*, 442 *note*, 455.
Abdallah (Ibn Abbas), 267, 299.
Abdallah ibn Masud, 191 ; his "reading" of the Coran, 192 ; 218, 222, 223.
Abdallah, son of Merwan II., 423, 430.
Abdallah, son of Omar, 34, 200, 201, 256, 318, 322.
Abdallah ibn Tâhir, 505 *sqq.*, 517, 520, 521.
Abdul Rahman, son of Khalid, 314.
Abs, the Beni, 14, 16, 379 *note*.
Abu Abdallah, 565.
Abu Ahmed, 537, 539, 543 (*see also* Mowaffac).
Abu Arslan, 585.
Abu Aun, 430, 431, 433.
Abu Ayub, a "Companion," 314.
Abu Ayub, Abu Jafar's vizier, 449, 466.
Abu Bekr, 1, 2 ; addresses the men of Medina, 3 ; elected Caliph, 4 ; inaugural address, 4, 5, 45 ; his appearance and his fidelity to the Prophet, 7 ; orders the Osâma expedition to return to the Syrian border, 9, 10 ; instructions to Osâma's army, 10, 11 ; repels the attack of disaffected tribes on Medina, 13–15 ; chastises rebel tribes at Rabadza, 16 ; despatches expeditions for the conquest of Arabia, 17 ; his proclamation to apostate tribes, 17, 18 ; sobriquet applied to him, 22 and *note* ; liberates Toleiha, 23 ; exonerates Khalid from the guilt of Malîk's death, 28 ; letter to Ikrima, 30 ; letter to Khalid on his marriage with Mojâa's daughter, 34 ; clemency to Amr ibn Madekerib, 39 ; spares the traitor Ashath, 41 ; his savage punishment of a freebooter, 42 ; determines to subdue Chaldæa, 50 ; despatches Khalid ibn Saîd to the Syrian frontier, 65 ; addresses troops on their departure for Syria, 67 ; orders Khalid ibn Welîd to take

command at Wacûsa, 70, 71; commands a levy for the aid of Mothanna, 80; presides over a pilgrimage to Mecca, 82; illness, death, and burial, 83–85; appoints Omar his successor, 83, 84; character, disposition, and habits, 85–88; called "the Sighing," 86; inscription on his seal of State, 87; faith in Mahomet the secret of his strength, 88; 143, 156, 163, 196, 197, 200, 201, 203, 204, 304, 316, 528.
Abu Catâda, 26, 27.
Abu Cays, admiral, 217.
Abu Dulaf, 512 and *note*, 556.
Abu Dzarr, 223–225.
Abu Hamza, 423, 424.
Abu Hanîfa, 465 and *note* 2, 468 *note* 2, 511 *note* 3.
Abu Hodzeifa, 31, 227.
Abu Horeira, 479.
Abu Ishac, 451.
Abu Jafar, 428, 439, 441, 442, 445 and *note* 1, 446, 447; Caliph, 448; his treatment of Abu Muslim, 450 *sq.*; 452 *sqq.*; defeats Ibrahim, 459; founds Bagdad, 459 *sqq.*; deposes Isa from Kufa, 463; 465; death and character, 467, 468.
Abu Jafar, one of Tuzûn's generals, 577, 578.
Abu Lulu, assassin of Omar, 198, 199, 200, 209.
Abu Mihjan, 118 and *note*.
Abu Musa, governor of Bussorah, 189, 190; transferred to Kufa, but returns to Bussorah, 191; deposed, 220; 222; at Kufa, 232; 252, 261, 262; one of the umpires at Siffin, 279; overreached by Amru, 285; retires to Mecca, 285; 298 *note*.
Abu Muslim, 421, 427, 428, 429, 436, 442, 444, 445 *notes*, 446, 447, 448, 449–451.
Abu Nasr, 452, 454.
Abu-nesa (Munuza), 408 and *note* 1.
Abu Obeid, 89, 90; attacks the Persians, 91; killed at the "battle of the Bridge," 92, 119, 336.
Abu Obeida, 3, 4, 8, 68, 70, 75, 77; supersedes Khalid as chief commander in the west, 100; 101; clemency at the capitulation of Damascus, 103, 104; at Fihl, 106; 107, 108; besieges Hims, 139, 140; 142, 145, 151, 152; Khalid arraigned before him for malversation, 154; dies from the plague, 166; 197, 205.
Abu Rabia, 207.
Abu Salma, 430, 438, 439 and *note* 2, 440, 445, 447.
Abu Saraya, 499.
Abu Sarh, 207 and *note*, 215 and *note*, 216 *sqq.*, 238.
Abu Sofian, 75, 167, 197, 310.
Abu Talha, 200, 206.
Abu Talib, Aly's father, 327, 395 *note*, 420 *note*, 421, 429.
Abul Aas, 333 *note*.
Abul Abbas ("Saffâh"), 395 *note* 1, 428 and *note* 2, 430 *sqq.*; Caliph, 439; 440 *sqq.*; death, 446; his bloodthirsty character, 447.
Abul Aur, 105, 106.
Abyssinia, wreck of naval expedition to, 188; 433.
Acaba, Gulf of, 166.
Ackil, 299.
Acraba, 30.
Aden, 39, 40, 41, 124, 455.
Adi, chief of the Tai, 22, 53.
Adi, a Christian of Hira, 58.
Adzraat, 72.
Afghanistan, 320 *note*, 351.
Africa, Arab prestige in, 47; 214; conquests in, 214 *sq.*, 313; 353 *sqq.*, 368 and *note* 1, 372, 389, 407, 424, 435, 464, 480, 565, 570, 574.
Afshîn, 517, 519, 520, 521.
Aghlab, 464.
Ahmed, Moslem saint, 524, 528.
Ahmed ibn Hanbal, 510, 511.
Ahmed ibn Tulun, 539 and *note* 2, 541, 551, 552, 553.
Ahwaz, 177, 178, 296, 336, 341, 350, 458, 492, 493, 547, 548, 549, 564.
Ain Shems (Heliopolis), 171.
Ain Tamar, 61, 63.
Aja, 323.
Ajnadein, 144; battle of, 145.
Akhtal, poet, 358.
Aksonker Buranky, 586.
Al Khizr, 118.
Al Kindy, "Apology" of, 153 *note*, 185 *note*, 244 *note*, 514.
Al Sunh, 85.
Ala, military leader, 17; Resident at Mondzir's court, 35; reduces the province of Bahrein, 35, 36; 177, 178, 256.
Albera, 424.
Aleppo, 51, 140, 152, 274, 341, 384, 472, 586, 601.
Alexandria, 151, 169 and *note*; capitulation of, 172; 175, 176, 214, 217, 507, 529.
Algezira, 369 and *note* 3.
Ali Bey, his description of Omar's mosque, 146 *note*.
Allis, battle of, 55, 56; 93.
Aly, his traditionary claim to the Caliphate, 5 and *note* 2; 14, 18, 63 *note*, 86, 87, 130, 167, 197, 199, 200, 205 *sqq.*, 211; 223, 229; upbraids Othman,

233; 237 *sqq.*; elected Caliph, 248; declines to punish the regicides, 249, 250; appoints new governors, 251; letter to Muavia, 251; proclaims a campaign against Muavia, 253; marches against the rebel army at Bussorah, 257, 261, 262; at the "battle of the Camel," 264, 265; transfers the seat of government from Medina to Kufa, 268; invades Syria, 274 *sqq.*; at the battle of Siffin, 276; consents to arbitration, 279; retires to Kufa, 280; the Kharejites rebel against him, 282; his reception of the arbitrators' judgment, 286; curses Muavia, 286; defeats the Kharejites, 290; collapse of Syrian expedition, 292; loses Egypt, 293; puts down a rebellion in Bussorah, 294, 295; quells Khirrit's rebellion, 296; repels Syrians, 298; concludes treaty with Muavia, 299, 300; assassinated, 302, 303; wives and children, 303 and *note*; character, 304; his name cursed, 307, 308, 312, 382, 410; 321 *note*; his chair, 338; 395 *note*, 396, 420, 437, 439, 510, 528, 566, 582 *note*.

Aly, governor of Fars, 541.

Aly, son of Saladin, 593.

Aly, uncle of Abu Jafar, 453.

Aly Asghar (son of Hosein), 326, 327.

Aly Baba, 530.

Aly ibn Isa, 485, 486, 491.

Aly-ridha, 501, 502, 503, 513, 605 *note* 2.

Ameer ul Omra, 571, 572, 576.

Amghisia, sacking of, 57.

Amid, 557.

Amida, 154.

Amîn, 477, 482, 486; his breach with Mamun, 488; deposes Mamun, 490; dissipated character, 491; deposed, 492; slain, 496.

Amir Abul Tufeil, last of the "Companions," 391 *note* 2.

Ammar, 191, 202, 207 and *note*, 236, 267 *note* 2, 275, 276 *note* 1; his death, 277.

Amr (son of Hosein), 327.

Amr, son of Yacub (Saffaride), 551.

Amr ibn Leith, 556.

Amr ibn Madekerib, poet and Arab chief, 38, 39, 111, 117.

Amr ibn Sad, 324 and *note*, 325, 338.

Amr ibn Said, 341; his murder, 342 and *note*, 357.

Amru, 13, 17, 36, 66, 68, 69, 70, 75, 106, 107, 139, 144, 145, 146, 153, 165, 166, 169; invades Egypt, 170 *sq.*; marches on Alexandria, 172; his government of Egypt, 173 *sq.*; his mosque, 173 and *note*; his firm rule, 187; 197, 214; superseded in Egypt, 215; 216, 270, 271; commands the army against Aly, 274 *sqq.*; appointed one of the umpires, 279; overreaches Aly's umpire, 285; conquers Egypt for Muavia, 293; 302, 309.

Amuria, 214.

Anbar, 61, 63, 440, 444, 445, 447, 597.

Anbasa, 408.

Ancyra, 472, 479.

Anis, 349.

"Ansar," men of Medina, 7 and *note*, 31, 200, 470.

Antioch, 140, 151, 152, 354, 552.

"Apology" of Al Kindy, 153 *note*, 185 *note*, 244 *note*.

Apostasy, perpetual discredit attached to, 46.

Arabia, insurrection throughout, 12 *sqq.*; apostasy of, 17; expeditions against the apostates in, 17 *sqq.*; restoration of peace in, 41, 43; expulsion of Christians and Jews from, 157, 158; 297, 523, 537, 574, 585.

Arabs: 12; their relapse into apostasy, 17, 19; submission to Mahomet's successor, 19 *sqq.*; sullenness after their reclamation to Islam, 43; tribal jealousies, 44; foreign war kindles their loyalty to Islam, 44, 45; they become the aristocracy of Islam, 46, 160; slaves set free by Omar, 46; their ascendency afterwards supplemented by Turks and Persians, 47; Christian Arabs in the Greek army, 73; their settlements at Bussorah and Kufa, 134 *sqq.*, 148; share in the spoils of war and revenues, 158, 159; registration, 159, 161; vast exodus from Arabia, 162; famine, 164; hostility against the Coreish, 210 *sq.*, 229; cast off by the Abbassides, 436; lose pre-eminence, 468.

Arafat, Mount, 226, 345.

Arbitration at Siffin, 279 *sq.*

Arcam, 314.

Ardebil, 517.

Ardshir, king of Persia, 55.

Arish, 170.

Arles, 408.

Armenia, 152, 214, 313, 314, 353, 354, 368, 378, 406, 416, 464, 479, 517, 530, 535.

Armorium, 519.

Artabun, Greek commander, 144, 145, 171.

Asad, the Beni, 21, 23, 118.

Asad, 395, 400, 403, 404.

Ashath ibn Cays, chief of the Beni Kinda, 39; his treachery, 40; spared by Abu Bekr, 41, 86; married to a sister of Abu Bekr, 41; 111, 154, 279.
Ashnas, 519.
Ashras, 400.
Ashtar, 230, 231, 232, 269, 274 and *note* 1, 277, 278, 279, 280; his death, 293.
Asia Minor, 140, 152, 187, 214, 353, 368, 378, 405, 466, 472, 479, 508, 518, 530, 535, 541, 552, 565, 601.
Asim, his valour at Cadesiya, 118, 119, 121; 128, 267 *note* 2.
Asim, 403.
Asma, one of Abu Bekr's wives, 84, 86.
Asma, Ayesha's sister, 267 *note* 1, 345, 346.
Assassins (fanatic sect), 566 and *note*, 567, 588, 589.
Astorga, 371.
Asturias, 390.
Aswad, the "Veiled Prophet," 12, 38.
Atamish, vizier, 535, 536.
Aus, the Beni, 4, 7, 44.
Avignon, 408, 409.
Ayesha (Mahomet's favourite wife), 1, 2, 8, 86, 159 *note* 1, 196, 200, 203, 244; seeks to revenge the death of Othman, 255; stirs up sedition at Mecca, 255; accompanies the rebel army in its march upon Bussorah, 256-260; at the "battle of the Camel," 264; retires to Mecca and then to Medina, 267; death, and anecdotes about her, 267 and *note* 2; 293 *note*, 311 *note*, 314, 344 *note* 2, 529, 582.
Ayla, 66, 165, 166.
Azd, the Beni, 363, 403.
Azerbijan, 184, 185, 213, 222, 416, 423, 465, 473, 508, 517, 529, 559, 577.
Azrackites, the, 347, 350.

BAALBEK, 139, 298, 418.
Babek, brigand, 508 and *note*, 517, 518 and *note*, 524.
Babkial, 540, 542, 545, 546.
Babylon, 51, 52; battle of, 79, 80; 125, 126.
Backie, Medina burying-ground, 200, 457.
Baghdad, 97, 126, 149; immorality in, 196 *note*, 458; founding of the new city of, 459–461; 467, 468 *note* 2, 470, 474, 475, 478, 486, 491; besieged, 494; 500, 504, 523, 527, 535 *sqq.*, 543 *sqq.*, 549, 566, 569, 571, 573, 577 *sqq.*, 596.
Baghir, 537.
Bahli, 388 *note* 2.
Bahman, Persian general, 54, 55, 91, 93, 119.
Bahrein, 17, 19, 35, 177, 549, 563.
Bajila, the Beni, 118.
Bajkam, 572, 573, 575.
Balanja, 389.
Balis, 274 *note* 2.
Balkh, 184, 212, 313, 362, 363, 403, 404, 447.
Barada, the, 420.
Barbad, 473.
Barca, 175, 215, 313, 355, 552.
Barcelona, 371.
Baridy, 575, 576.
Barmecides, the, 362 and *note*, 404, 447, 478, 483 *sqq.*, 522.
Barmek, physician, 362, 404, 447.
Basil, kaiser, 554.
Basisiri, 583 *sqq.*
Battâl, 405 and *note* 2, 406.
"Battle of the Camel," 263–266.
"Battle of the Chains," 53
Bedouins, their fickleness, 13; attack on Medina, 14, 15; rivalry with city Arabs at Yemama, 31; attached by fear to the Caliph, 43; their tribal jealousies, 44; united to Islam by the prospect of rapine, 44, 45; of Mesopotamia, 51, 55, 152, 153; jealous of the Coreish, 138, 202, 210 *sq.*; 141, 281, 282; in Spain, 424; 548, 562.
Bedr, 117, 202, 219, 221.
Bedr, men of, 67, 159.
Bedr, Abd al Rahman's servant, 463.
Beibars, 599, 601.
Beisan, 105, 106 and *note*, 107, 108, 144.
Bekr, the Beni, 29, 49, 54, 55, 96, 111, 333 *sqq.*
Belbeis, 170, 174.
Belcaa, the, 68, 99, 428.
Belik, river, 274 *note* 1.
Berbers, 313, 354, 355, 368 and *notes* 2 and 3, 383, 407 *sqq.*, 424, 464, 475, 565.
Bethlehem, 147.
Beyrut, 108.
Bilâl, muedzzin of the Prophet, 155, 168, 197.
Birs Nimrud (Tower of Babel), 52.
Bitah, 30.
Biyas, 366.
Black Sea, 214.
Bogha, "the less," 533, 537.
Bogha, "the elder," 523, 530, 536, 538, 539, 540.
Bokhara, 313, 362, 363, 366 *note* 1, 400, 444, 472; prince of, 356.
Bokhari, the, 511.

Bokhary, 331 *note*.
Bosor, his raid on Medina and Mecca, 298, 299 and *note*.
Bosphorus, the, 141, 379, 473, 601.
Bostra, 51, 62, 68, 108.
Boweib, 94 ; battle of, 95, 96.
Bozâkha, 16 ; battle of, 22.
Brahminabad, 366 and *note* 2.
Bridge, battle of the, 92.
Bulgarians, 569.
Buran, daughter of Hasan ibn Sahl, 503, 504, 505, 506.
Buran, queen of Persia, 90, 109.
Burgundy, 409.
Busîr, 433.
Bussorah, its founding, 134, 135 ; crown lands and endowments of, 137 ; influence on the future of Islam, 137, 138 ; school of, 138 ; growth of faction and sedition at, 138 ; 148 162, 165, 177, 178, 179, 183, 185, 188, 191, 192, 202, 204, 211 ; deposition of Abu Musa, 220 ; 229, 251 ; march of rebels upon, 256–260 ; the "battle of the Camel" at, 261–266 ; new governor appointed, 267 ; 288, 289, 295, 296, 310, 311, 336 ; taken by Ibn al Ashath, 351 ; slaughter by Hajjâj in, 352 ; 386, 423, 440, 441, 444, 458, 461 and *note*, 493, 499, 548, 564, 574, 586.
Buyeh, 573.
Buyide dynasty, 578, 580 *sqq*.

CABIHA, 542, 543, 544.
Cacaa, left in command at Hira, 62, 63 ; 75 ; arrives at Cadesiya, 119 ; 120 ; puts to flight a herd of elephants, 121 : 122, 131, 132, 151, 152, 231, 262.
Cadesia, 231.
Cadesiya, 107, 112, 113 ; battle of, 117–124, 277.
Cadir, Caliph, 582, 583.
Cæsarea, 144, 145, 151 ; its fall, 153 and *note*, 169.
Cahir, 569 ; Caliph, 571, 572.
Cahtaba, 429, 430, 447.
Caim, Caliph, 583 *sqq*.
Cairo, 173, 372, 551, 558, 599, 602.
Cairowan, 313, 354, 355, 369, 372, 407, 464, 481, 551.
Caliph, meaning of title, 4 and *note*, 435.
Canals in Chaldæa, 136, 162.
Candahar, 313.
Carcassone, 408.
Carmat, 561.
Carmathians, 558, 561 *sqq*., 570, 572, 582.
Carmel, Mount, 144.
Carmona, 371.
Carthage, 215, 355.
Casim, Hosein's nephew, 326.
Casim, Harun's third son, 479, 482, 486.
Caspian Sea, 182, 213, 214, 368, 377, 406, 490, 520.
Catif, 35, 49.
Caucasus, 416, 420.
Cays (son of Sad ibn Obada), governor of Egypt, 251, 269, 270, 292, 293, 307.
Cays, Arab chief, 38, 39.
Cays, the Beni, 333, 338, 339, 353.
Cazee, office of, 192.
Ceuta, 369.
Chaldæa, apostasy in, 44 ; campaign in, 48 *sqq*.; 99, 101 ; land settlement in, 136 ; 162, 165, 183.
Charles the Great, 487.
China, 366, 487.
Chosroes, the, 48, 49, 53, 59 *note*, 69, 126, 129, 180, 181, 417 *note*, 460.
Christians, 12, 48, 55 ; of Hira, 57, 59 and *note* ; at Ain Tamar, 61, 62 ; among Syrian Arabs, 73 ; their courage roused by monks and bishops at the battle of Wacûsa, 73 ; fighting with Moslems, 94, 95, 96 ; their churches in Damascus after the fall of the city, 104, 105 ; 141 ; their disabilities, 149 ; prohibited from dwelling in the Arabian peninsula, 153 ; removed from Najran, 157 ; 382, 511 ; enactments against, 529 ; 535, 585.
Church of St. John at Damascus, 101 ; turned into a mosque, 104 ; inscription, 105 ; 382.
Church of the Resurrection, 147 ; of Constantine, 147 ; of the Nativity, 147.
Cilicia, 141.
Circassians, 406.
Codeis, 112, 116.
Codhâa, the Beni, 11, 17.
Coinage, Mussulman, 354 and *note*.
"Commander of the Faithful," title of, first assumed by Omar, 203.
Companions, origin of term, 7 ; 18 ; number killed at Yemama, 32 ; number in the Syrian army, 67 ; contingent in Sad's army, 112 ; their rivalry with the Bedouins, 160 ; 189, 202, 271, 390, 391.
Concubinage, influence of, 195, 606.
Constans II, 218 *note*.
Constantine, afterwards emperor, 405 *note* 2, 453.
Constantinople, 49, 141, 142, 169, 214, 314, 378, 383, 479, 602.
Copts, the, 170, 171, 174, 175.

Coran, the: counterfeited by Moseilama, 29; hoisted on flagstaffs and lances in battle, 31, 278; "readers," 34; universal empire not commanded, 45; recited in battle, 116, 117; allusion to Mahomet's heavenly journey, 146 *note*; "collection" of, 163; Abdallah ibn Masud's "reading," 192; instruction in, 192; recension of, 222; 245, 280, 281; 382, 391; heterodox views of Mamun, 510; 515, 524, 528, 606.
Cordova, 370, 435, 463, 607.
Coreish, the, 3, 13, 20, 24, 57, 68, 138, 160, 190, 202, 207, 210, 211, 220 *sqq.*, 224 *note* 1, 229 *sqq.*, 250, 264, 266, 271, 279, 281, 284, 319 and *note*, 393.
Coreitza, the Beni, 365 and *note* 1.
Coteiba, 353, 361, 362 *sqq.*; rebellion and death, 376, 377.
Crete, 479, 507, 535.
Crusaders, 586, 587, 589, 593.
Ctesiphon (Medain), 49, 51, 126, 460.
Cumis, 421.
Cyprus, occupation of, 217, 479, 480.

DABA, battle of, 37.
Dabic, 379, 380.
Dadweih, 38.
Dahna, desert of, alleged miraculous lake in, 36.
Dair Saman, 385.
Damascus, 51, 68, 101; invested by Moslem army, 102; storming and capitulation of, 103, 104; church of St. John the Baptist, 104, 105; 108, 138, 140, 144, 149, 153, 165, 168; drunkenness in, 194; 236; the capital of the Moslem empire, 307; 332; emblems of Othman's murder exposed in the mosque, 252; a mint established at, 354 and *note*; 374, 413, 414, 418, 419, 420, 425; taken by Abdallah, 432; 441, 481, 492, 509, 523, 531, 552, 587, 588.
Daniel, tomb of, 179.
Darin, island of, 36.
Daud, 398, 439.
Dauphiné, 409.
"Day of Tears," 256.
Dead Sea, 65, 68, 144.
Deccan, the, 405.
Deibul, 366.
Deilem, 378, 455, 481, 485, 544, 572.
Delta of the Euphrates, 49, 51 *sq.*, 91, 97.
Demavend, 182.
Derbend, 406.
Dewan of Omar, 162, 193.
Dhabba, 189, 190.
Dhahhak, 333, 334.
Dhahhak, Kharejite leader, 421, 422, 423.
Dhirar, puts Malik to death, 27; 76, 77, 106.
Dihcans, 52, 60.
Dissipation, growth of, 194–196.
Dongola, 173.
Druses, the, 566.
Dubeis, general, 586, 588.
Duma, 11, 50, 61; stormed by Khalid, 62; 194, 284, 317.
Dura, plain of, 51, 125.
Dzobian, the Beni, 14, 16.
Dzul Cassa, 14, 15, 16, 17.
Dzul Kelaa, 65, 66, 102, 139.
"Dzulficar," the Prophet's sword, 457, 570.

EBRO, the, 371.
Ecija, 370.
"Eden of Islam, the," 104.
Edessa, 139, 579.
Egypt, 144, 145; conquest of, 169 *sqq.*; 215, 229, 232, 251, 252, 269; conquered by Amru for Muavia, 293; 332, 334, 507, 508, 529, 540, 551, 558, 566, 570, 574, 599.
Elephants in battle, 79, 91, 92, 95, 116 and *note*, 118, 121.
Elwand, 183.
Emessa (*see* Hims).
Ephesus, 479.
Equality of Believers, 142, 159, 160.
Ertogral, 601 *note*.
Erzerum, 354.
Esdraelon, plain of, 105, 107.
Eudo, count, 408.
Euphrates, the, 49, 50, 51, 52, 112, 114, 125, 133, 141, 162, 274, 324, 387, 430, 441, 548.
Executions, barbarity of, 348 *note*.

FADAK, 381.
Fadhl, son of Yahga ibn Khalid, 465, 466, 478, 481, 482, 483, 484.
Fadhl ibn Rabia, 490, 492, 493, 505.
Fadhl ibn Sahl, 489, 490, 498, 500, 501, 503, 512, 513.
Famine, 164.
Farazdac, poet, 323, 358, 379 and *note*.
Fars, 185, 212, 296, 297, 340, 350, 386, 458, 541, 550, 573.
Faryâb, 364 *note* 2.
Fatima, daughter of Mahomet and wife of Aly, 5; her sons, 6; 197, 205, 303, 304, 456 and *note* 2.
Fatima, Hosein's daughter, 326.
Fatimides, the, 564 *sqq.*, 581, 582, 584, 590.
Fellaheen, 52, 55, 60.
Ferghana, 362, 364, 366, 388, 404, 444, 541.

Feroze, 38, 41.
Fezâra tribe, 389.
"Field of idols," battle of, 407.
Fihl (Pella), 105, 106; battle of, 107, 144.
Firadh, battle of, 64.
Firuzan, Persian general, 182; proverb concerning, 183, 184.
Fostat, 173, 174, 176, 236, 249, 433, 552, 558, 566.
France, 390, 408.
Fujaa burned alive for treachery, 42.

GALICIA, 370, 371.
Galilee, Lake of, 69.
"Garden of Death," 32, 33, 43, 163.
"Garden of the world" (Chaldæan Delta), 52, 101.
"Garden of the world" (plain of Damascus), 101.
Gaza, 144, 145.
Gerona, 371.
Ghassan, the Beni, 51, 62, 142.
Ghatafan, the Beni, 21.
Ghazies, 276 and *note* 2, 278, 352, 406.
Ghazni, 212 and *note*, 313.
Ghizeh, 173.
Gibraltar, 369 and *note* 2, 372.
Gilan, 378.
Gilboa, 105.
Gilead, 99, 100.
Granada, 370.
Greek fire, 494.
Greeks: 68; troops massed at Wacûsa, 69; defeated by the Moslems, 75–77; surrender at Damascus, 103; routed at Fihl, 107; losses in northern Syria, and retirement of Heraclius to Constantinople, 139–141; their rising in northern Syria, 151 *sqq.*; in Egypt, 169 *sqq.*; hostilities with Moslems in 647 A.D., 214; Muavia's operations, 313, 314; 343; Abd al Melik's hostilities against them, 353; 359, 379, 405, 425, 472, 479, 480, 508, 517, 530, 541, 552, 554, 559, 569, 579.
Gregory, governor of Carthage, 215, 216.
Guadalete, the, 369.

HABIB, 364.
Habib, governor of Sind, 367.
Habîba, slave-girl, 392 and *note*.
Hadhramaut, 37, 38, 39.
Hady, 465, 471, 473, 474; accession to the Caliphate, 475; cruel treatment of heretics, 476; death, 477.
Hafir, 53, 55, 59 *note*.
Hajjâj, 162, 328 *note*, 330 *note*, 340, 344 *note* 2, 345; the worst tyrant of his age, 347; 348 *sqq.*; his remorse, 360; death, 361 and *note* 2; 362, 386, 460 *note*.
Hakam, 333 *note*.
Hakim (Fatimide), 566.
Hama, 140.
Hamadan, 182, 183; fire-temple at, 184; 429, 452, 465, 482, 490, 512, 517, 588, 596.
Hamza, 33, 197.
Hani, 323.
Hanîfa, the Beni, 29, 30, 32, 33, 63 *note*.
Hanifite, the (son of Aly), 63 *note*.
Hanifites, 511 *note* 3.
Haphsa, Omar's daughter and one of Mahomet's wives, 8, 163, 222, 256.
Haram, the, at Jerusalem, 146 *note*; at Mecca, 188.
Harb, 333 *note*.
Harith, 403, 404, 416, 426, 427.
Harora, 282, 287.
Harran, 416, 418, 419, 425, 428, 430, 432, 434, 441, 448, 552, 587.
Harthama, 480, 486, 490, 492, 494, 496, 499, 500, 513.
Harun (Rashîd), 465, 466, 471 *note*, 472 *sqq.*; accession to the Caliphate, 477; his cruelty, 477; religious life and character, 478; letter to Nicephorus, 480; faithlessness, 481, 482, 485; his son Amîn appointed heir-apparent, 482; death, 487; reception of embassy from Charles the Great, 487; splendour of his reign, 488; 603.
Harun, son of Khomaria, 556, 558.
Hasan ibn Sahl, 498 *sqq.*
Hasan, son of Aly and grandson of Mahomet, 6, 261, 299, 303 and *note*; succeeds Aly in the Caliphate, 306 and *note*; abdicates, 307; death, 308; 316, 317, 322, 327, 328 and *note*, 336, 400 *note* 1, 404; character and death, 410, 411; 455, 534.
Hashim ibn Otba, 107, 119, 121, 126, 131, 277.
Hashimites, 160, 200, 206, 207, 210, 211, 419, 421, 434, 443, 476.
Hâshimiya, 459.
Hassan, 355.
Hatim Tay, 53, 312.
Hauran, the, 69, 72, 144, 166, 441.
Hawazin, the Beni, 110.
Hebron, 68.
Hegira, the, era of, 193.
Hejaz, the, 165, 174, 223, 226, 301, 312.
Hejer, province of, 35, 564.
Heraclea, 480.
Heraclius, emperor, 48, 49, 68, 69, 102, 104, 106, 139, 140; his farewell to Syria, and retirement to Constanti-

nople, 141 ; exchange of gifts between his wife and the wife of Omar, 142, 143 ; 187, 318 *note*.
Herat, 212 and *note*, 312, 335, 353, 356, 421, 427, 464, 485.
Heretics, treatment of, 471, 472, 476, 524.
Hermon, 99.
Hims, 69, 102, 106, 133 ; its capitulation, 140 ; 149, 151, 152, 154, 165, 222, 231, 414, 418, 419, 420, 423, 531, 537, 587.
Himyars, the, 65, 66, 102, 139.
Hind, wife of Abu Sofian, 167, 197.
Hira, 50, 52 ; besieged by Khalid, 57 ; its capitulation, 57, 58 ; remains Christian, 59 and *note* ; "service of victory" at, 59, 60 ; 63, 64 ; 79, 90, 113, 114 ; taken for the third time, 125 ; 344, 420, 422.
Hisham, 333 *note*, 367, 383 ; Caliph, 391, 393, 401 *note* 1, 403, 412, 414, 441, 603.
Hit, fortress of, 133, 600.
Hobâb, 3, 4.
Hodeibia, 159, 279.
Hodzeifa, military leader, 17 ; reduces Oman, 37 ; 222.
Holagu, 596, 597.
Holwan, 127, 131, 132, 137, 177, 182, 183, 421, 449, 481, 492, 594.
Homeima, 427, 428.
Honein, battle of, 24, 189.
Horeish, 334, 335.
Hormuz, satrap of the Delta, 52, 79, 117.
Hormuzan, 178, 179, 180 ; embraces Islam, 181 ; murdered at Medina, 209.
Horr, Arab chief, 324.
Hosein, son of Aly and grandson of Mahomet, 6, 303 and *note*, 322 *sqq.* ; killed at Kerbala, 326 ; 336, 337, 528, 534, 581.
Hosein, son of Aly ibn Isa, 492, 493, 503, 507.

IBN AAMIR, governor of Bussorah, 212, 221, 229, 230, 233, 251, 256.
Ibn Abbas, 201, 244, 250, 258, 269, 282, 322.
Ibn al Ashath, rebels against Hajjâj, 351 ; takes Bussorah, 351 ; defeated, 352 ; takes refuge with Ratbil, who afterwards beheads him, 352.
Ibn Athîr, v, 348 *note*, 355 *note*, 367, 466 *note* 1, 469 *note* 1, 506 *note*, 511 *note* 1.
Ibn Ayesha, 506, 513.
Ibn Cahtaba, 429, 430, 442.
Ibn Casim (*see* Mohammed ibn Casim).
Ibn Daud, 524, 528.
Ibn Hanbal, 511, 515, 571 *note*.
Ibn Hobeira, 421 *sqq.*, 428, 430, 431, 438, 441 *sqq.*, 443 and *note* 1, 447, 456.
Ibn Honeif, 258, 259, 260.
Ibn Ishac, historian, 62.
Ibn Jobeir, 360.
Ibn Kethir, 445 and *note* 2, 450.
Ibn Khallican, 484 *note*.
Ibn Khazim, 334, 335, 346, 356.
Ibn Khozeima, 454, 464.
Ibn Masud, 191, 192, 218, 222, 223, 225.
Ibn Muavia, 420, 421, 429.
Ibn Muljam, assassin of Aly, 302, 303.
Ibn Omar, 415, 420.
Ibn Raic, 572, 573, 575, 576.
Ibn Sauda (Saba), 229 and *note*.
Ibn Sikkit, 532.
Ibn Toghej, 573.
Ibn Zobeir, 256, 267, 285, 318, 319, 322 ; affects the Caliphate, 329 ; attacks Medina and Mecca, 330, 331 ; 332 *sqq.* ; besieged at Mecca and killed, 345, 346.
Ibraham ibn al Ashtar, 337 *sqq.* ; 434 *note*.
Ibrahim, the Aghlabite, 551.
Ibrahim, son of Abdallah, 455, 456, 458, 459.
Ibrahim, Amîn's uncle, 495 ; saluted Caliph, 502 ; 503, 504, 506, 507.
Ibrahim, friend of Jafar (Barmecide), 484, 485.
Ibrahim (son of Mohammed, Abbasside pretender), 415, 427 ; death, 428, 431, 436, 438.
Ibrahim, son of Welid I, 333 *note*, 417 ; assumes the government of Damascus, 418 ; death, 419.
Idris, 475.
Ikhshidite dynasty, 573 and *note*, 577.
Ikrima, military leader, 17 ; suffers a reverse at Yemama, 30 ; his victory at Mahra, 37 ; 39, 40 ; marries a lady who had been betrothed to Mahomet, 41 ; operations on the Syrian frontier, 65, 66, 68, 75, 76 ; his death at Wacûsa, 77.
Imamship, the divine, 305, 437, 510, 560, 605.
India, 366–368, 405, 444, 473, 605.
Indus, the, 312, 313, 366, 405.
Insurrection throughout Arabia on Mahomet's death, 12 *sqq.*
Irac, 49, 50, 81, 84, 89, 94, 107 ; Sad appointed commander in, 110 ; 134 ; land settlement in, 136, 137 ; 163, 223, *et passim*.
Irac Araby, 51 and *note*, 177, 593.
Irene, queen, 473, 479, 480.
Isa, 446 *note*, 447, 448, 450, 451, 457, 458, 459, 462 and *note*, 463.

Isa, vizier of Ibrahim brother of Mansur, 505.
Isfandiar, Persian general, 184.
Islam, the world-wide mission of, 44, 133; its immobility, 606, 607; its intolerance, 608; decline of political status, 609.
Ismailians, 561 *sqq.*
Ispahan, 180, 182, 184, 282, 341, 421, 537, 573, 585.
Istakhr (Persepolis), 297, 310, 312, 421.
Itakh, 522 *note.*
Italy, 507, 527.
Iwân of Medain, the, 126, 460.
Iyadh, military leader, 50, 61, 62, 63, 152.
Iyadh, the Beni, 152, 153.

Jabala, Christian prince of Bostra, 62, 63; embraces Islam, but recants, 142.
Jaban, Persian general, 90, 91, 93.
Jabia, 145, 152, 166, 333.
Jafar, son of Yaha ibn Khalid, 478, 482, 483 *sqq.*
Jafar, Aly's brother, 86, 420.
Jafar, son of Abu Jafar, 466.
Jafariya, 531.
Jalola, battle of, 131, 132; 430.
Janissaries, 249 *note.*
Jareja, a Greek general, deserts to the Moslems at Wacûsa, 75, 76.
Jarîr, 94, 97, 110.
Jarrah, 384, 406.
Jaulan, 99.
Jaxartes, the, 492.
Jedda, 537.
Jeishaba, 405.
Jenghiz Khan, 592.
Jerash, 108.
Jerir, poet, 358, 379 *note.*
Jerusalem, 124, 141, 144, 145; capitulates, 145; Omar's visit to, 146–148; 374, 405, 453, 465, 470, 586.
Jews, 12, 107; their disabilities, 149; their numbers in Cæsarea, 153 *note*; expelled from Kheibar, 158; 370, 382, 511; enactments against, 529.
Jezreel, vale of, 105.
Jizia, or capitation tax, 351 *note.*
John the Grammarian, 517 *note* 1.
Joneid, 367, 401, 402 and *notes*, 403, 405.
Joppa, 145.
Jordan, the, valley of, 68, 101, 105, 106; river, 69, 99, 146; reduction of the province of, 107; 144.
Jorf, 9, 67.
Jorjan, 377, 378, 388, 429, 475, 482, 487, 504.
Joscelin, 587.
Joweiria, 314 *note* 2.
Judi, a chief of Duma, 62.
Julian, count, 354, 369 and *note* 1, 370.
Jundai-Sabur, 180.
Justinian, 354.
Juzajân, 364.

Kaaba, the, 146 *note*, 187, 225, 226; destroyed, 331 and *note*; rebuilt, 331, 344; 470, 482, 490, 499, 537, 564.
Kab, 225.
Kabul, 212, 312, 356, 363, 536 *note.*
Káhcán, the, 400, 401, 402, 404.
Kamanja, 400 *note* 2.
Kansuweh, 601.
Karoon, river, 178, 548.
Kashgar, 366.
Kaskar, 90, 91.
Kelb, the Beni, 62, 320, 333.
Kerakh, 460 *note.*
Keramat, a lady of Hira, 58.
Kerbala, 305, 324, 328, 329, 337, 339, 430, 528.
Kerman, 184, 185, 212, 213, 214, 297, 341, 350, 352, 386, 387, 429, 541.
Khabîth, 548, 549 and *note*, 550.
Khabur, river, 133.
Khadija, Mahomet's first wife, 6.
Khaffan, 94.
Khalid ibn Welid: expedition against Toleiha, 17, 19, 22; receives the submission of apostates, 23; his generalship and his designation, 20; advances against the Beni Temîm, 24, 25; his treatment of Malîk ibn Noweira, 26, 27; marries Malîk's widow, 27; exonerated by Abu Bekr, 28; held guilty by Omar of Malik's death, 28; campaign against Moseilama, 29–34; marries Mojâa's daughter, 34; campaign in Irac Araby, 50 *sqq.*; his summons to Hormuz, 53; oration to his troops, 54, 55; severity after the battle of Allis, 56; occupies Hira, 58; his severity at Ain Tamar, 61; storms Duma, 62; defeats the Persians at Firadh, 64; performs an incognito pilgrimage to Mecca, 64, 70; reinforces the Moslem army at Wacûsa, 70–72; his operations and victory at Wacûsa, 74–77; superseded by Omar's orders, 77, 100; storms Damascus, 103; 106, 107, 139, 140; received into Omar's favour, 143; 145, 152; arraigned for malversation before Abu Obeida, 154, 155; summoned to Medina, and deposed from his government by Omar, 155, 156; illness and death, 156, 197; 202.

Khalid ibn Saîd, posted on the Syrian frontier, 65; defeated at Marj, 66; 221 *note*.

Khalid, son of Yezid, 333, 334, 341.

Khalid, the Barmecide, 362 and *note*, 447, 460, 462 *note*, 465, 473.

Khalid (Yemenite), governor of Kufa, 395, 396, 397, 404, 412, 413, 460 *note*.

Khanikin, 594.

Kharejites, hostile to Aly, 281, 282; their creed, 287, 350; their outrages, 289 and *note*; numbers slain at Nehrwan, 290; their frequent risings, 290, 291, 296, 297; 301, 308, 319 *note*, 329, 332, 335, 336, 340, 347, 349, 382, 396, 407, 409, 419, 421, 423, 427, 429, 444, 463, 475, 478, 485, 486, 523, 554, 557.

Kharizm, 592.

Khawarnac, pastures of, 59 *note*; palace of, 113, 125, 343.

Khazraj, the Beni, 3, 4, 7, 44.

Kheibar, 5, 20, 158.

Kheizran, mother of Hady and Harun, 465, 473 *sqq*.

Khirrit, rebellion of, 296, 297.

Khizrs, the, 213, 389, 406, 464, 479.

Khojend, 366, 388.

Khomaria, 552, 553, 556,

Khorasan, 90, 132, 180, 185, 312, 334, 335, 346, 356, 362 *sqq*., 377, 384, 388, 403, 415, 426, 437, 444, 454 *sqq*., 461, 464, 467, 482, 520, 544, 550, 556.

Khottal, 404.

Khowarizm, 212, 365, 366 *note* 1.

"Khozeina," 390.

Khujistany, 550.

Khulm, 364.

Khuzistan, 134, 179, 183, 192, 549.

Kilab, the Beni, 304 *note*.

Kinda, the Beni, 39, 154, 279.

Kinnisrin (Chalcis), 140, 143, 152, 154, 411, 418, 422, 441.

Kiphjaks, the, 389.

Kirkesia, 133, 137, 139, 337, 341, 343, 422.

Kirmany, 416, 426, 427, 428.

Kish, 363, 364 *note* 2, 366 *note* 1.

Koseila, 354, 355.

Kotheir, poet, 358.

Kubbet al Sakhra, the, 146 *note*.

Kufa, 52, 94, 125; its founding, 135; crown lands of, 137; its influence on the future of Islam, 137, 138; school of, 138; hotbed of sedition, 138; 148, 157, 162, 163, 178 *sqq*., 183, 185, 188, 190 *sqq*., 202, 204, 211, 213; discontent at, 219, 221, 223, 227–232; 261; becomes the Moslem seat of government, 268; 280, 282, 292, 293, 295, 298, 299, 302, 306, 307, 310, 322, 329, 338, 340, 343, 348, 350, 387, 388, 415, 422; taken by Ibn Cahtaba, 430; taken by Abu Salma, 438; 458, 461 and *note*, 493, 499, 536, 554; stormed, 564; 565, 574.

Kurds, the, 189, 296, 361, 465, 523, 558, 575, 587.

Kurtekin, 575.

LABID, the Jew, 511 *note* 1.

"Lady's Castle, the," 53.

Lakhmite dynasty, 57, 59 *note*.

Land, settlement of, in Irac, 136, 137.

"Land of Blessing," 68.

Laodicæa, 140, 466.

Lebanon, 99, 566, 567.

Leila, widow of Malîk, wedded to Khalid, 27; her life saved by Mojâa, 31; story of, 194.

Leila, sister of Kharejite rebel, 481.

Leo the Isaurian, 379, 405.

Levant, the, 214, 216, 217.

Little Zab, the, 430.

Lugo, 372 and *note*.

Lulu, town of, 531, 552, 554.

Lulu (freed Memluk), 552, 553.

Lydda, 145.

Lyons, 409.

MAAB, 108.

Madekerib, Amr ibn, 38, 39, 111, 117.

Mahfuza, 367, 405.

Mahmud, 565, 581, 582.

Mahomet: death, 1; burial, 4; his children, 6; his reception of Moseilama's ambassador, 29; dying legacy, 44; his heavenly journey, 146 and *note*: treaty with Najran, 157; allowances made to his widows and concubines, 159 and *note*; declaration of equality amongst Believers, 159; 204; loss of his signet-ring by Othman, 227; 257, 267 *notes* 1 and 2, 279, 314; his pulpit and staff, 315; 316, 321, 327, 344 *note* 2, 346, 385, 391 *note* 1, 394, 511 *note* 1, 582 *note*, 608.

Mahra, 17, 37.

Majorca, 368.

Malaga, 370.

Malatia, 453.

Malik ibn Anas, 458, 468 *note* 2, 511 *note* 3.

Malîk ibn Noweira, chief of the Beni Yerboa, 25; brought a prisoner to Khalid, 26; put to death, 27; his widow marries Khalid, 27; character and poetic talent, 28; 156.

Mameluke dynasty, 599 *sqq*.

Mamûn, 244 *note*, 477, 482, 483, 485, 486, 488; breach with Amîn, 489; Caliph of the East, 490; 493, 498; proclaims Aly-ridha heir-apparent, 501; enters Bagdad, 504; marriage with Buran, 507; commences the foundation of Tyana, 508; heterodox views, 510; features of his reign, 511 *sq.*; death, 513; 541, 604, 605 *note* 2.

Manichæans, 471, 472, 476.

Mansur, 501, 502.

"Mansûr the Victorious," name assumed by Abu Jafar, 448.

Mansurah, 366 *note* 2, 405.

Manuel, Greek admiral, 175.

Marash, 141, 480.

Mardin, 423.

Mareb, 40.

Marj Soffar, engagement at, 66.

Martel, Charles, 408, 409.

Mary, the slave-girl, 6, 170, 197.

Mascala, 297.

Maslama, 359 *note*, 379, 383, 387, 388, 389, 392, 406, 441.

Masrur, brother of Yezid III, 414.

Masud, Sultan, 588.

Masudy, 224 *note* 1.

Maziad, the Beni, 586.

Maziar, 520, 521.

Mecca, 1, 13, 20, 37, 68, 160, 215, 223; pilgrimage to, 47, 64, 83, 110, 142, 146 *note*, 168, 187, 212, 226, 234; Ayesha stirs up sedition at, 255; Bosor's raid on, 298; 318; bombarded, and the Kaaba destroyed, 331; 344; besieged, 345; 359, 360, 445, 467, 475, 478, 499, 564.

Medain, 49, 51, 54, 59, 61, 90, 93, 97, 108, 113; invested and captured by Sad, 127–130; the immense spoil taken, 129 and *notes*; 288, 420, 449, 460, 504, 575.

Medina, Mahomet's death at, 1 *sqq.*; state of parties at, 6, 7; attacked by disaffected tribes, 13, 14; saved by Abu Bekr, 15; domestic history in the first year of the Caliphate, 47; review of troops for Syria at, 67; 85, 110; famine in, 164; volcanic fires near, 188; the mosque, 226; sedition in, 233; conference of governors at, 236; attacked by conspirators, who murder Othman, 239–246; abandoned as the capital of Islam, 268; Bosor's raid on, 298; 316, 317, 318; attacked and sacked, 330; 359, 360, 374, 379, 456, 457; date groves cut down, 459; 475, 523, 554.

Medina Sidonia, 369.

Mediterranean, the, 108, 215, 368, 507.

Mehdy, 433, 446, 454, 455, 457, 458, 461; appointed heir-apparent, 462; 465, 466; accession to the Caliphate, 469; his cruelty, 470 *sqq.*; suppression of heresy, 471, 472; 473; death and character, 474; 476.

Mehmud, Sultan, 587.

Meisun, mother of Caliph Yezid, 320.

Mekran, 366.

Melik Rahim, 583, 584.

Melik Shah, Sultan, 585.

Membaj, 274 *note* 1.

Membij, 141.

Memluks, 249 *note*, 516 and *note* 1, 599 *sqq.*

Memphis, 173.

Merida, 371.

Merj Dabik, battle of, 601.

Merj Rahit, 333, 334, 339.

Merve, 178, 184, 212, 213, 335, 351, 356, 362, 364, 377, 384, 388, 403, 415, 421, 427, 428, 486, 491, 498, 502, 544.

Merwan, cousin of Othman, 234, 235, 240 *note*, 242, 245, 266, 270, 318 *note*; elected Caliph, 333; 334; death, 334; 357, 382.

Merwan II, grandson of Merwan I, 406 and *note*, 413, 416; saluted Caliph, 419; difficulties and insurrections of his reign, 419 *sqq.*; his defeat at the battle of the Zab, and flight, 431, 432; slain at Busîr, 433; character, 434 and *note*; 439, 453.

Merwan, poet, 488 *note* 2.

Mesopotamia, 30, 49, 51, 97, 109, 112, 127; Sad's operations in, 133 *sqq.*, 139; 151, 152, 182, 221, 273, 274, 298, 335, 339, 416, 422, 437, 441, 452, 475, 481, 482, 493, 517, 544, 557, 564, 573, 574, 587, 591.

Micdad, citizen of Medina, 205, 207.

Michael, 472.

Mina, 226.

Mint, royal, at Damascus, 354 and *note*.

Miracles, alleged, 36, 315.

Mirzabans, 212.

Mirzuban, 178.

Moadz, 166.

Moanna, Mothanna's brother, 111.

Moayyad, 535.

Mobarca, 523.

Mocanna, 472.

Modathir, 561.

Modhar, the Beni, 264, 334, 400, 414, 416, 418, 422, 427, 428, 441, 463, 492.

Moghira ibn Shoba, governor of Bussorah, 178, 180; arraigned on a charge of adultery, 188, 189 and *note*; appointed governor of Kufa, 191; 193, 198, 202, 219, 233, 250, 309, 310, 311, 318.

Mohajir, military leader, 17, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Mohakkem, a leader of the Beni Hanîfa, 32, 33.

Mohallab, 336, 340, 341, 343, 344, 347 *sqq.*; death, 351, 356.

Mohammed, great-grandson of Abbas, 394, 395, 415, 427.

Mohammed ibn Abdallah (grandson of Hasan), 442 *note* 1, 455 and *note* 1, 456. 457.

Mohammed, son of Abu Bekr, 227, 238, 244, 245, 265, 270, 292, 293 and *note*.

Mohammed (Hanefite son of Aly), 337, 338, 339, 341.

Mohammed, son of Aly-ridha, 508.

Mohammed, son of Bogha, 546.

Mohammed ibn Casim, 366, 367, 376.

Mohammed, son of Ismail, 561.

Mohammed (son of Khalid, governor of Kufa), 430.

Mohammed ibn Omar, 511 *note* 2.

Mohammed ibn Soleiman, 558, 561, 562.

Mohammed, grandson of Tahir, 535.

Mohammed, son of Takash, 592.

Mohammed, son of Toghluk, 601.

Mohammed Alhabîb, 565.

Moharram, the, 328.

Mohtady, succeeds to the Caliphate, 542; his virtues, 543; 544, 545; death, 546; 547.

Mojâa, chief of the Beni Hanîfa, 30; captured by Khalid, 30; 33; his daughter married to Khalid, 34.

Mokran, 185.

Mondzir, Christian chief, 35.

Mongols, 592, 593, 596, 597.

Morocco, 368.

Mosawwir, 541, 545.

Moseilama, pretender to the Caliphate, 13, 17, 25; his devices for deceiving the people, 29; marries Sajáh, the prophetess, 29, 30; attacked by Khalid, 30–33; killed in the battle of Yemama, 33.

Mosque of Omar, 146 and *note*.

Mosul, 51, 133, 137, 274, 298, 335, 337, 338, 416, 422, 423, 430, 432, 443, 465, 478, 481, 493, 523, 537, 541, 545, 552 *sqq.*, 558, 570, 572, 576, 584, 588.

Motadhid, 549, 554; Caliph, 555, 556; his death, 557.

Motamid, Caliph 547, 550, 553, 554; his death, 555.

Motammin, 27, 28.

Motassim, 513; accession to the Caliphate, 515; 518; conspiracy against him, 519, 520; 521; death and character, 522; 526.

Motawakkil, 511 *note* 1; succeeds to the Caliphate, 526; his cruelty and rapacity, 526, 527; divides the empire among his sons, 529; assassinated, 532, 533; 542.

Motazelites, 509, 515, 528.

Mothanna, a Bekr chief, 36; attacks Chaldæa, 49 *sqq.*; 53, 54, 61, 71; defeats the Persians at the battle of Babylon, 79, 80; a levy for his aid commanded by Abu Bekr, 80; at the "battle of the Bridge," 92, 93; victory at Boweib, 95, 96; death, 97, 111; character and military skill, 97, 98; 109, 110; dying message, 111.

Mowaffac, 547 *sqq.* (*see also* Abu Ahmed).

Muâdz, a reciter of the Coran, 93.

Muavia, son of Abu Sofian, 68, 108, 153, 167, 187, 197, 210; governor of Syria, 214, 216, 217, 224, 231, 233, 237; 242. 248, 250, 251: exposes the emblems of Othman's murder in the mosque of Damascus, 252; his despatch to Aly, 253; 269, 270 *sqq.*; meets Aly on the field of Siffin, 274, 276; deputes Amru to be one of the umpires, 279; retires to Damascus, 280; saluted Caliph, 286; wins Egypt, 293; his raids on Arabia, 297; 298; concludes a treaty with Aly, 299, 300; wounded in the mosque, 302; 304; succeeds Hasan as Caliph, 307; reconciled to Ziad, 310; operations in the East, 312; campaign against Greeks, 313, 314; declares his son Yezid heir-apparent, 318; death and character, 321; 441, 509, 603.

Muavia II, 332.

Muayyad, 539.

Mucoucus, governor of Upper Egypt, 170. 171 *note*, 172.

Muctadir, 566; Caliph, 568 *sqq.*

Muctady, Caliph, 585.

Muizz ud Dowla, Sultan, 578, 580.

Mukhtar, 336, 337 *sqq.*

Muktafy, son of Motadhid, Caliph, 557, 558; death, 559; 562, 568.

Muktafy, son of Mustazhir, Caliph, 589.

Multan, 366, 565.

Mundzir, 59 *note*.

Munis, 566, 568, 569, 571.

Muntassir, 528 *note* 2, 529, 532, 533; succeeds to the Caliphate, 534; his death, 534.

Munuza, 408 *note* 1.

Musa, conqueror of Spain, 62, 355, 368, 369; lands in Spain, 370; conquests, 371; recalled, 372; his fall, 372, 373 and *note*.

Musa, son of Bogha, 542, 544, 545, 547, 549, 551.
Musa, son of Ibn Khazim, his career in Khorasan, 356; defeated and slain, 356.
Musa, son of Isa, 462.
Musab, 334, 335, 336, 340 *sqq.*; death, 343; 348 *note.*
Muslim, 322 and *note* 2, 323, 336.
Mustadhy, Caliph, 589.
Mustain, Caliph, 535, 536, 537; besieged at Bagdad, 538; abdicates, 538; assassinated, 539; 541, 543 *note.*
Mustakfy, Caliph, 577, 578, 581.
Mustanjid, Caliph, 589 and *note.*
Mustansir, Caliph, 593.
Mustansir, Egyptian Caliph, 599, 600.
Mustarshid, 586, 587, 588.
Mustassim, last of the Caliphs, 595 *sqq.*
Mustazhir, Caliph, 585.
Muta, battle of, 9, 20, 60, 86, 420.
Mutawakkil, Egyptian Caliph, 601, 602.
Mutazz, 529, 532, 534, 536; Caliph, 537, 538, 540, 541; death, 542; 543 *note*, 544.
Mutie, Caliph, 581.
Mutilation of songstresses for satirising, 41.
Muttaky, Caliph, 575 *sqq.*

NADIR, the Beni, 365 and *note* 1.
Nahr-shir, the, 61.
Naila, one of Othman's wives, 228, 246, 248, 252.
Najaf, lake of, 52, 113, 125.
Najah, 532 and *note.*
Najda, 341.
Najran, 38, 156.
Narbonne, 390, 409.
Narsa, Persian general, 90, 91.
Nasir, "Defender of the Faith," Caliph, 591 *sqq.*
Nasir ud Dowla, 576, 577.
Nasr, Arab chieftain, 498, 499, 500.
Nasr, pretender in Syria, 492.
Nasr, viceroy at Merve, 404, 415, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429; death, 429.
Naval expeditions, 188, 214, 216, 217, 368.
Nehavend, battle of, 183, 198, 213; 429.
Nehrwan, 288; Kharejites defeated at, 290, 301, 302; 500, 504, 536.
Nejd, 14, 258, 259.
Nestorians at Ain Tamar, 62.
Nezak, 363, 364.
Nicephorus, 479, 480.
"Night of Clangour," 122; second (battle of Siffin), 277.
Nile, the, 170, 171, 173 *sqq.*, 558.
Nineveh, 49, 558.
Nisabur, 429, 452, 508.
Nishapur, 212, 356.
Nisibin, 152, 423, 448, 481, 576, 584, 587 and *note.*
Nismes, 398, 408.
Noman, 59 *note*, 179, 180, 183.
Noushirwan, 297.
Nubians, 173, 215.
Nurudin, 599.
Nusaf, 364 *note* 2, 366 *note* 1.
Nushirvan, line of, 213.

OBEIDALLAH (Fatimide), son of Mohammed Alhabîb, 565, 566.
Obeidallah, Motawakkil's vizier, 532.
Obeidallah, son of Omar, 209.
Obeidallah, son of Ziad, 323, 324, 325, 327, 328, 332, 335, 336 *sqq.*; his death, 339.
Obolla, 50, 52, 124, 134.
Ocba, taken prisoner at the battle of Bedr, 219.
Ocba, one of Amru's generals, 313, 354, 355.
Ocba, son of Hajjâj, 408, 409.
Odzeib, 112, 120, 124.
Ohod, 20, 33, 197, 245 *note* 1, 265.
Ojeif, 517, 519, 520.
Okeidar, a chief of Duma, 62.
Okkâsha, 22, 23.
Oleiya, Harun's sister, 484.
Oman, 13, 30, 35; reduction of, 36, 37; 444 and *note.*
Omar: discredits the rumour of the Prophet's death, 2; confronts the men of Medina, and declares Abu Bekr to be the Prophet's rightful successor, 3, 4; his appearance and temperament, 7, 8; disapproves of the Osâma expedition, 10; 18; his reception of Toleiha, 23; holds Khalid guilty of Malik's death, 27, 28; his first idea of collecting the Sacred Text, 34; restrains the spirit of conquest, 45; liberates slaves of Arab blood, 46; appointed judge in civil causes, at Medina, 47, 87; Abu Bekr appoints him his successor in the Caliphate, 83, 84; Abu Bekr's confidence in him, 87; accession, and address to the people, 89; deposes Khalid, and orders a levy for Mothanna, 89; his reception of the news of Moslem reverses, 93; 106, 107; determines to subdue Persia, 109; goes on pilgrimage to Mecca. 110; his reception of the tidings of the victory of Cadesiya, 124; apprehensive of evil results to the people from the acquisition of immense spoils of war, 132; prohibits a

further advance on Persia, 132; orders Sad to pull down the gateway of his palace at Kufa, 135, 136; land settlement in Irac, 136, 137; receives Khalid into favour, 143; visits Jabia and Jerusalem, 145–148; his "Ordinance," 149, 150; second visit to Jabia, 152; his register of Arab tribes, 159, 161; self-denial during famine, 164; precautions ordered during the plague, 166; visits Syria, 166–168; last pilgrimage to Mecca, 168, 198; letter to the river Nile, 175; his reception of Hormuzan, 180, 181; orders an advance for the conquest of Persia, 182; the later years of his reign, 187–197; simplicity of his domestic life, 196; his wives, 196; assassination, 199; appoints electors to choose successor, 199; wishes to be buried near the Prophet, 200; death, 201; achievements of his Caliphate, 201; character, 202, first "Commander of the Faithful," 203; averse to naval operations, 216; 316, 528.

Omar II, 104, 367, 376, 379; Caliph, 381; policy, 382–385; death, 385; 603.

Omar, son of Abd al Aziz, 359, 360.

Omar ibn Hobeira, 389, 395.

Omeyya, house of, 160, 167, 168, 206, 207, 210, 211, 214, 229, 246, 250, 252, 266, 305, 311, 320, 327, 328, 330, 332, 333, 347, 383, 387, 392 *sqq.*, 400, 412, 424 *sqq.*, 434, 435, 440 *sqq.*, 447, 463, 528, 538, 603 *sq.*

Omm Habiba, daughter of Abu Sofian, 243, 244 *note*, 311 and *note*, 314 *note* 2.

Omm Haram, story of, 217 *note*.

Omm Keis (Gadara), 106.

Omm Kolthum, a daughter of Mahomet and wife of Othman, 205.

Omm Kolthum, Omar's wife, exchanges presents with the Byzantine empress, 142, 143; 196, 197.

Omm Kolthum, daughter of Aly, 197, 303.

Omm Salma, 314 *note* 2.

Omm Siml, 24.

"Omm Walad," 193, 434 *note*.

"Ordinance of Omar," 149, 150.

Osâma, expedition to the Syrian border of, 9–11, 43; his victorious return to Medina, 16.

Osmanlies, the, 601 and *note*, 602.

Otba, a Companion, 134, 177, 178, 188.

Othman, son-in-law of Mahomet, 6, 83, 84, 87, 163, 175, 199, 200, 205, 206; elected Caliph, 207; inaugural address, 208; increases stipends, 209; causes of his unpopularity, 210 *sqq.*; his campaigns in the East and against Turks and Khizrs, 212, 213; charged with partiality and nepotism, 215, 216, 218; permits naval operations, 217; his recension of the Coran, 222, 223; palace, 224 *note* 1; increasing unpopularity, 226–228; loses the Prophet's signet-ring, 227; growing disaffection against him, 229–234; Aly expostulates with him, 233; his appeal to the people, 233, 234; last pilgrimage to Mecca, 234; treated with contumely, 245; summons a conference at Medina, 236; plot against him, 236–247; besieged in his palace, 242–245; murdered by conspirators, 245; his burial, 246; 305, 312, 336.

Othman ibn Honeif, 251.

Oxus, the, 182, 184, 212, 312, 313, 351, 356, 362, 365.

Oyeina, chief of the Beni Ghatafan, 21, 22, 24.

PALESTINE, 68, 101, 139; conquest of, 144 *sqq.*; divided into two provinces, 148; 165, 410, 414, 420, 432, 440, 523, 537, 586.

Patriarch of Jerusalem, 145, 146, 147.

Pedigrees, tables of, 333, 393, 395, 535.

Peikund, 362.

Pepin, king, 464.

Persepolis, 177, 183, 188, 297.

Persia: Arab invasion, 48 *sqq.*; paralysed by internal troubles, 60, 61; defeated at the battle of Babylon, 79, 80; Rustem raises an army, 90; defeated in the Delta, 91; the "battle of the Bridge," 92; routed at Boweib, 95–97; Yezdegird succeeds to the throne, 109; revived military movement, 109; total defeat at Cadesiya, 117–124; capture of Medain, 127; disasters at Jalola and Holwan, 131, 132; conquest of, 177–186; rising, 212; 421, 437, 452, 465, 468, 482, 485, 523, 569, 591, 604, 605.

Persian Gulf, 133, 182, 312, 490, 592.

Pilgrimage to Mecca, 47, 64, 70, 82, 110, 142, 168, 212, 234, 446, 453, 478.

Plague in Syria, 165, 166, 411.

Poitiers, 408.

Prayer, presidency at, signification of, 5 *note* 1, 6.

Pyrenees, the, 390, 408.

RABADZA, 14, 16, 225.

Rabia, the Beni, 264.

Rabie, minister of Mehdy, 471.

Radhy, Caliph, 572, 574.

Rafi, 486, 490.

Rafica, 461.
Raimond, 586.
Rajjâl, 29; killed at Yemama, 31.
Ram Hormuz, 177, 179.
Ramleh, 144, 145; capitulates, 146; 531.
Rashid, Caliph, 588, 589.
Rashîd the upright (*see* Harun).
Ratbil, 351, 352, 364.
Rawendies, the, 453, 454, 459.
"Readers" of the Coran, 34, 276 and *note* 2, 352, 368, 407.
Red Sea, 174, 188, 384, 454.
Refugees, the, 7, 32, 44, 316.
Register of Arab tribes, 159, 161.
Rei, flight of King Yezdegird to, 132; its fall, 184; 324 *note*; 341, 421, 429, 446, 452, 458, 459, 465, 485, 491, 544, 556.
Reinaud, 409 *note* 1.
Rhone, the, 409.
Ricca, 274 and *notes* 1 and 2, 298, 461, 478, 484, 486, 505, 538, 551, 576.
Ridaniah, 601.
Rita, wife of Mehdy, 455.
"River of Blood," 56.
Rockeya, a daughter of Mahomet and wife of Othman, 205.
Roderic, Spanish usurper, 369 and *note* 1, 370, 373 *note*.
Roha (Edessa), 139, 152.
Romans, the, remains of cities founded by, 100.
Rôr, 366, 367.
Rusâfa, 411, 420.
Rusâfa, near Bagdad, 461, 469, 470.
Russians, 577.
Rustem, rouses Persia against the invaders, 90; 91, 109, 112; advances to the Moslem camp at Cadesiya, 114, 115; 120; killed at Cadesiya, 122, 123; 184.

SABA KULIAT, fortress of, 602.
Sad ibn Malik, appointed commander in Irac, 110; marries Mothanna's widow, 112; describes Cadesiya to Omar, 113; 115, 116, 118; taunted with cowardice by his wife, 119; 121, 122; re-enters Hira, 124; invests and captures Medain, 127–130; 131, 132; operations in Mesopotamia, 133 *sqq.*, 139; his "castle" at Kufa, 135, 136; 151, 152, 177, 182; deposed from the government of Kufa, 191; 199, 200, 205 *sqq.*; reinstated at Kufa, and then recalled, 219.
Sad ibn Obâda, chosen by the men of Medina to succeed the Prophet, 3; his chagrin at the election of Abu Bekr, 5.
Saffarides, 529, 536, 550, 551, 556.
Safia, aunt of Mahomet, 197, 314.
Said (Egypt), 433.
Said ibn al Aas, governor of Kufa, 221, 230 *sq.*, 256, 377.
Said, son-in-law of Maslama, 388.
Sajâh, the prophetess, 25; married to Moseilama, 30.
Saladin, 566, 590, 593.
Salamanca, 371.
Salih, 432, 433.
Salih, son of Wassif, 541 *sqq.*
Sallâma, 392.
Samanide house, the, 550, 556.
Samarcand, 313, 356, 365, 401, 402, 404, 444, 445, 485, 486, 490.
Samaritans, 107, 153 *note*.
Sameisat, 531.
Samira, 516 and *note* 2, 517, 518, 520, 523, 524, 530, 531, 536 *sqq.*, 543, 547.
Samsat, 141.
Samsat (Madikerib's sword), 524 and *note*.
Sanaa, 38, 40, 565.
"Sapor, trench of," 52, 112, 113.
Saragossa, 371, 383.
Sardinia, 368, 407.
Sarrakhs, 503.
Saurat, 401, 402.
Sawâd, the, of Irac, 136.
Schools of Bussorah and Kufa, 138.
Sea of Galilee, 98, 144.
"Sea of Najaf," 52, 113.
Seal of Abu Bekr, 87.
Sedir, pastures of, 59 *note*.
Sejestan, 185, 212 and *note*, 269, 351, 364, 464, 529, 536, 551, 556.
Seleucia, 51, 126, 460.
Selim, 601, 602.
Seljuk, 588.
Seljuks, the, 580, 583 *sqq.*, 591.
Selma, wife of Sad, 112; story of her liberation of Abu Mihjan, 118; taunts her husband with cowardice, 119.
Selma, 323.
Serukhs, 212, 429.
"Service of Victory" at Hira, 59, 60.
Seville, 371.
Shafie, 511.
Shahrzor, 430, 452.
Shamir ibn Dzu al Joshan, 325 and *note*, 326, 338.
Shat al Arab, 133.
Shebib, 350 and *note*.
Shechina, 117 *note* 1.
Sheraf, 111.
Shie-ites (or Sectaries), 394 and *note*, 395 *note*, 399, 501, 536, 560, 573, 580, 581, 590, 595, 604, 605.
Shiraz, 573.
Shiyas, the, 322 *note* 2, 325 *note*, 327, 328 *note*, 510 *note*, 605.

Shoman, 364 *note* 2.
Shorahbil, military leader, 17, 30: commands a battalion in the Syrian campaign, 68; 106, 107, 144, 146.
Shush, 366.
Shushan, 179.
Sicily, 355, 407, 507, 551.
Sidon, 108.
Sidonia, 371.
Siffin, 274 and *note* 2, 275; battle of, 276–279, 321 *note*, 492.
Sinbad the Magian, 452 and *note*.
Sind, 366, 383, 401, 405, 423 *note* 2, 444, 455, 465, 551.
Siroes, 49, 109.
Slaves, Christian, treatment of, 153 and *note*.
Society, Moslem, 193 *sqq.*, 226, 467, 468, 469, 488, 606, 607.
Soffarides, the, 407 *note* 1, 422.
Soghd, 362, 363, 365, 400, 444, 521.
Soghdiana, 364, 388, 405.
Soheib, 199; performs the funeral service over Omar, 203.
Soleim, the Beni, 523.
Soleiman, 333 *note*, 361 and *note*; Caliph, 372, 373 *note*, 374, 375, 376; death, 379; his cruelty, 379, 380; 384, 386.
Soleiman, governor of Bussorah, 449, 453.
Soleiman, head of the Tahiride family, 544.
Soleiman, leader of fanatics, 564.
Soleiman, son of Hisham, 412, 414, 418, 419, 422, 423 and *note* 2.
Soleiman, Sultan, 602.
Someisat, 441.
Someyya, 207, 276 *note* 1.
Songstresses mutilated for satirising, 41.
Soonnies, the, 604 and *note* 1.
Spain, Arab prestige in, 47; conquest of, 354, 368–372; 376, 383, 389, 407, 408, 424, 435, 463, 473.
Suez Canal, 174 and *note*.
Sultan of Bagdad, 578.
Sur al Rum, 274 *note* 1.
Sus, 179, 182, 183, 368, 492.
Syeds, the, 303.
Syracuse, 218, 407.
Syria, apostasy in, 44; 48, 49; campaign (633–634 A.D.) in, 65 *sqq.*; campaign of 634–635 A.D., 101 *sqq.*; Greek losses in the north, and retirement of the emperor to Constantinople, 139–141; 144; later conquests, 144–153, administration, 163 *sqq.*; visit of Omar, 166 *sqq.*; Muavia, governor of, 214; Aly's expedition against, 274 *sqq.*; 330, 331, 334, *et passim*.
Syria, desert of, Khalid's march across, 71, 72.

TABARI, historian, v, 570, 571 *note*.
Tabaristan, 214, 378, 406, 454, 485, 520, 536, 556.
"Table of Solomon," 370, 371 and *note* 1, 373 *note*.
Tables of pedigrees, 333, 393, 395, 535.
Tadmor, 72, 108, 420, 424, 512.
Taghlib, the Beni, 25, 61, 63, 96, 153.
Tâhir, 491 and *note*, 492, 493; besieges Bagdad, 494–496, 498, 499; 504; viceroy in the East, 505; death and character, 505, 506, 513; 532.
Tahiride dynasty, 529, 536, 541, 543, 550.
Taie, Caliph, 582.
Tâk i Kesra, the, 126.
Takash, Kharizm Shah, 591.
Takharistan, 212, 362, 401, 404.
Talavera, 371.
Talha, one of the chiefs at Medina, 14, 83, 199, 205, 208, 230, 238 *sqq.*, 248, 251, 254 *sqq.*, 261 *sqq.*; death after the "battle of the Camel," 264; 316, 317.
Talha, son of Tâhir, 505.
Tangier, 354, 368, 475, 481.
Taric, 368, 369 *sqq.*, 373 *note*.
Tarif, 369.
Tarkum, 356.
Tarragona, 371.
Tarsus, 479, 480, 509, 518, 552, 554, 559.
Tartars, 593, 597.
Tay (or Tai), the Beni, 15, 21, 22, 53, 92, 323.
Tayif, 13, 37, 188, 197, 309, 345.
Taym, the Beni, 302.
Tekrit, 97, 127, 133, 593.
Temîm, the Beni, 15, 25, 117, 335, 356, 363, 403.
Thapsacus, 274 *note* 1.
Thaur, mount, 346.
Theocratic faction (*see* Kharejites).
Theodora, empress, 530 and *note* 2.
Theodore, brother of the emperor Heraclius, 69, 77, 139.
Theophilus, emperor, 508, 518, 519.
Thibet, 490.
Tiberias, 68, 106, 108, 144, 420; Lake of, 105, 146.
Tiflis, 214, 464, 530.
Tigris, the, 51, 54, 125 *sqq.*, 131, 133, 162, 274, 288, 298, 421, 423, 490, 493, 516.
Tihama, the, 38.
Timseh, 174.

Timurtash, 587 *note.*
Tirmidz, 313, 356.
Tlemsen, 368.
Toghril, 591.
Toghril Beg, 583 *sqq.*
Tokat, 586.
Toledo, 370.
Toleiha, pretender to the Caliphate, 13, 14, 16, 17; his doctrines, 21; defeated at the battle of Bozakha, 22; embraces Islam, 23; his later career, 23, 111, 115, 183.
Tortosan, 371.
Tostar, 179, 180, 351.
Toulouse, 390.
Tours, 408.
Tower of Babel, 125.
"Trench of Sapor," 52, 112, 113.
Tripoli, 175, 215.
Tripolis, 108.
Tulunide dynasty, 541, 551, 558.
Tumanbeg, 601.
Tunis, 313, 464.
Turcomans, 356, 362, 389, 405, 406, 437, 535, 559, 581.
Turkestan, 214.
Turks, Arab ascendency partly supplanted by, 47; help given to Yezdegird by, 184; campaign against, 213; 313, 356, 368, 388, 400 *note* 2, 437, 472, 479 and *note* 1, 485, 516, 520, 535, 536 *sqq.*
Tus, 487, 489, 490, 503.
Tuzûn, 576, 577.
Tyana, 508, 509, 515.

Umpires chosen at Siffin, 279; their decision, 284–286.
Upper Mesopotamia, 273, 430 *sq.*
Ustad Sîs, 464.

Valencia, 371, 409.
"Valley of Hawâb," 257.
"Veiled Prophet" of Yemen, 12, 38.
Vendu, Greek general, 519.

Wackidi, 511 and *note* 2.
Wacûsa, massing of Greek troops at, 69; decisive victory of Moslems at, 75–77, 107, 145, 310.
Waddan, 313.
Wadi al Cora, 11.
Wady Araba, 68.
Wahshi, negro warrior, 32.
Walaja, victory of, 54.
Wasit, 353, 387, 396, 422, 430, 431, 438, 441, 442, 458, 460, 493, 507, 539, 549, 553, 573, 574, 575, 576, 578.
Wassif, 522 *note*, 534, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540.
Wassif, Turkish general, defeats the Carmathians, 563.
Wâthic, succeeds to the Caliphate, 522; his rapacity, 522; intolerant heterodoxy, 523, 524; death, 525; 542.
"Wazeer of the house of Mahomet," 430, 439.
Weil, Dr., 354 *note*, 367, 409 *note* 1, 447, 470 *note*, 475 *note*, 484 *note.*
Welid I, son of Abd al Melik, 104, 333 *note*, 357; Caliph, 359; 365 *note* 2; grandeur of his reign, 373; death, 374; 603.
Welid II, 333 *note*, 391, 399, 410 and *note*; accession, 412; character, 412; slain, 414.
Welîd, 62; co-operates with Khalid ibn Saîd on the Syrian frontier, 66; 68, 153.
Welid ibn Ocba, governor of Kufa, 219, 220.
Werdan, king of Bokhara, 363.
Widows of Mahomet, allowances to, 159 and *note* 1; 256.
Wine, use of, 154, 194, 410, 491, 510 *note* 1, 607.
Women, fighting in battle, 76; marching with armies, 94, 111, 134; applauded for their courage, 97; tending the wounded in battle and burying the dead, 120; killing wounded Persians at Cadesiya, 123; stipends allowed to, 159; restrictions against appearing in public, 195; their cruelty to wounded pilgrims, 563 and *note.*
World-wide mission of Islam, 44, 133.

Yacub, Mehdy's vizier, 470, 471 and *note.*
Yacub the Saffaride, 541, 550, 551.
Yacuta, 474.
Yahya, brother of Abul Abbas, 443.
Yahya, son of Khalid the Barmecide, 465, 475 *sqq.*, 483, 484.
Yahya, descendant of the Prophet's grandson Hasan, 481, 482, 536.
Yahya, son of Zeid, 399.
Year, the Moslem, vi, vii, 193 and *note* 1.
"Year of Ashes," 164.
"Year of Burning," 354.
Yemama, 25, 28; battle of, 30–33; 50.
Yemen, 12, 17, 19, 37, 38; restored to Islam, 39; 41, 251, 256, 260, 298, 400, 565.
Yemenites, 333, 338, 353, 393, 413, 414, 416, 418, 419, 422, 426, 463, 492.
Yenbo, 174.
Yerboa, the Beni, 25.

Yermuk, river, 69, 94, 99, 101, 106, 107.

Yezdegird, king of Persia, 109, 112, 113; summoned to embrace Islam, 113; treatment of ambassadors, 114; 116, 121; proposes terms to Sad, 127; his flight, 128, 131; 179; gathers a great army, 182; 184; death, 184, 213; 365 *note* 2, 417.

Yezid, son of Abd al Melik, 381.

Yezid, son of Abu Sofian, 68, 75, 106, 108, 139, 145, 153, 167, 214.

Yezid, Kufan rebel, 231.

Yezid ibn Hobeira, 422 and *note*, 423.

Yezid (son of Mohallab), 353, 356, 360, 361, 376; his cruelties in Khorasan, 378; his fall, 384; his rebellion, 386, 387.

Yezid, son of Muavia, 314, 317; declared heir-apparent, 318; his boyhood, 320; 321; assumes the Caliphate, 322; 323, 327, 329, 330; death, 331.

Yezid II, 333 *note*, 381, 383, 386, 387 *sqq.*; death, 392.

Yezid III, son of Welid I, 412, 413; accession, 414; attacked by Merwan, 416; death, 417; 419.

Yusuf, 397 and *note*, 398, 399, 413, 415; death, 419.

Yusuf, Modhar ruler of Spain, 463.

Yusuf, rebel of Khorasan, 470.

ZAB, river, 339, 425, 430, 431, 461.

Zahir, Caliph, 593.

Zakaruya, 561, 562, 563.

Zatts, the, 517.

Zeid, bosom friend of Mahomet, 9, 87; compiles the Coran, 163; 224 *note* 1.

Zeid, Omar's brother, 28; killed at Yemama, 31, 34.

Zeid, Hosein's grandson, 398, 399.

Zeid, son of Mohallab, 403.

Zeinab, a daughter of Mahomet, 63 *note*.

Zeinab, one of Mahomet's wives, 197, 326.

Zemzem, sacred well at Mecca, 564.

Zendics, the, 471, 476, 511 *note* 1.

Zenj rebellion, 547 *sqq.*, 553.

Zenky, 586 *sqq.*

Ziad, administrator of Hadhramaut, 39, 40, 41.

Ziad (son of Abu Sofian), despatched by Sad to Omar with Persian spoils, 132; 189, 190, 267, 295, 297, 310 *sqq.*, 317.

Ziad, governor of Samarcand, 444, 445.

"Zimmies," 60, 136.

Zobeida, 477, 487, 493 *note*, 498, 507.

Zobeir, one of the chief men at Medina, 14, 18, 170, 171, 173, 199, 205, 206, 224 *note* 1, 237, 238, 239, 241, 244, 248, 251, 254 *sqq.*, 263; death, 264.

Zoe, empress, 569.

Zoheir, 355.

Zoroastrians, 185 and *note*.

PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB LIMITED, EDINBURGH

SMITH, ELDER, & CO.'S NEW BOOKS.

THE LOVE-LETTERS OF MR. AND MRS. BROWNING.

Second Edition. With Two Portraits and Two Facsimile Letters. Two Vols. crown 8vo, 21s.,

The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett.

*** *These Volumes are uniform with "The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning."*

Spectator.—"We venture to think that no such remarkable and unbroken series of intimate letters between two remarkable people has ever been given to the world. . . . There is something extraordinarily touching in the gradual unfolding of the romance in which two poets play the parts of hero and heroine."

The Etchingham Letters. By Mrs. FULLER MAITLAND, Author of "Pages from the Day-Book of Bethia Hardacre," etc. ; and Sir FREDERICK POLLOCK, Bart. Crown 8vo, 6s.

The Musician's Pilgrimage: A Study in Artistic Development. By J. A. FULLER MAITLAND. Small crown 8vo, 5s.

Our Prayer Book: Conformity and Conscience. By the Rev. W. PAGE ROBERTS, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Canterbury, Author of "Law and God," "Liberalism in Religion," etc. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Academy.—"The Canon of Canterbury shows with humorous ingenuity that such stumbling-blocks as priestly absolution and the unkind threats of the pseudo-Athanasius need constitute no bar to religious communion with the most primitive or the most rationalistic of Puritans."

The War in Cuba. The Experiences of an Englishman with the United States Army. By JOHN BLACK ATKINS, M.A. With Four Maps and a Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Daily Chronicle.—"A most vivid and entertaining description, giving us a far better idea of what the war was really like to the men who took part in it, than all the possible statistics and military treatises."

Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman. Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto, Prince von Bismarck, Written and Dictated by himself after his retirement from office. Translated from the German under the supervision of A. J. BUTLER, late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. With Two Portraits, Young and Old (Young—from a Drawing in the possession of the family ; Old—by VON LENBACH), and a Facsimile of Handwriting. Two Vols. demy 8vo, price 32s.

Times (Leading Article).—"Of great and enduring interest, and must be read as long as the world continues to interest itself in history and its makers."

Rhodesia and its Government. By H. C. THOMSON, Author of "The Chitral Campaign" and of "The Outgoing Turk." With Eight Illustrations and a Map. Large crown 8vo, 10s. 6d.

Spectator.—"We do not hesitate to say that, however fully a man may think himself informed on South African affairs, he will do well to study Mr. Thomson's book. . . . Mr. Thomson's attitude is eminently judicial, and his views are expressed with great moderation. He is in no sense a 'crank' or a faddist."

Introduction to the Study of the Renaissance. By Mrs. LILIAN F. FIELD. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Academy.—"Mrs. Field seems to us to have accomplished her difficult task very well. The book is capitally ordered and arranged ; the essential is properly kept in the foreground, and the writing is clear, sympathetic, and scholarly."

The Sepoy Mutiny, as seen by a Subaltern from Delhi to Lucknow. By Col. EDWARD VIBART. With Two Portraits, a Plan, and Ten Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Army and Navy Gazette.—"A narrative of surpassing interest. It holds the reader spellbound by its intensity of feeling and narrative power."

Charles Lamb and the Lloyds. Edited by E. V. LUCAS. With Portraits and a Facsimile Letter. Small post 8vo, 6s.

Manchester Guardian.—"It is difficult to maintain critical composure and decorum on a discovery like this, and the difficulty becomes an impossibility when it is found that these additions to the canon of Lamb's writings are not inferior in beauty and interest to the best of his published work."

Idlehurst: A Journal kept in the Country. By JOHN HALSHAM. Crown 8vo, 8s.

Pall Mall Gazette.—"Very charming. . . . The best advice we can give to those who like to read about the country is, to get 'Idlehurst' for themselves."

The Poetical Works of Robert Bridges. Vol. I. Small crown 8vo, 6s.

CONTENTS :—Prometheus the Fire-giver—Eros and Psyche—and The Growth of Love.

Academy.—"In this edition Mr. Bridges at once makes his bow to the general public, and at the same time assumes the honours of an established and recognised poet"

British Rule and Modern Politics: An Historical Study. By the Hon. A. S. G. CANNING, Author of "The Divided Irish," "History in Fact and Fiction." Large crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Westminster Review.—"An examination of the effect of English literature upon modern politics, which in Mr. Canning's able hands is eminently successful."

LONDON: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

SMITH, ELDER, & CO.'S PUBLICATIONS.

Mrs. E. B. Browning's Letters. Edited, with Biographical Additions, by FREDERIC G. KENYON. Fourth Edition. With Portraits. Two Vols. crown 8vo, 15s. net.

Athenæum.—"It is not too much to say that these volumes are the first adequate contribution which has been made to a real knowledge of Mrs. Browning. . . . The inestimable value of the collection is that it contains not merely interesting critical writing, but the intimate expression of a personality."

Mrs. Browning's Complete Works. New and Cheaper Edition. Complete in One Volume. With Portrait and Facsimile of a "Sonnet from the Portuguese." Large crown 8vo, bound in cloth, with gilt top, 7s. 6d.

⁂ This Edition is uniform with the Two-Volume Edition of Robert Browning's Complete Works.

Times.—"This appears opportunely just now when Mrs. Browning's letters have been attracting attention, and is all the more welcome in that it is the first really complete edition of the poetess's works. . . . In form, as well as in substance, the volume will be a welcome addition to many a library and bookshelf."

The War of Greek Independence, 1821-1833. By W. ALISON PHILLIPS, M.A., late Scholar of Merton College, Senior Scholar of St. John's College, Oxford. With Map. Large crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

St. James's Gazette.—"We sincerely commend Mr. Alison Phillips' 'History of the Greek War of Independence' to all readers who have had their attention turned to that country of late. . . . We have met few books better calculated to clear the mind of cant on a subject concerning which much cant has of late been talked."

Friendship's Garland. By MATTHEW ARNOLD. Second Edition. Small crown 8vo, bound in white cloth, 4s. 6d.

Daily News.—"All lovers of Matthew Arnold and of genuine humour will hail with delight the republication of 'Friendship's Garland.' . . . The book is written throughout in the highest possible spirits, and there is not a dull page in it."

France under Louis XV. By JAMES BRECK PERKINS, Author of "France under the Regency." Two Vols. crown 8vo, 16s.

Times.—"A very good book. . . . Mr. Perkins' tracing out of the foreign policy of France through the wars which did so much to break down her power and the prestige of her crown, is very clear and intelligent, and his judgment appears to be generally sound."

Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain: Her Life, Reign, and Times, 1451-1504. By M. LE BARON DE NERVO. Translated from the Original French by Lieut.-Colonel TEMPLE-WEST (Retired). With Portraits. Demy 8vo, 12s. 6d.

Daily Telegraph.—"Neither too long nor too short, not overladen with detail nor impoverished from lack of matter, and is at the same time ample and orderly enough to satisfy the ordinary student."

Pot-Pourri from a Surrey Garden. By Mrs. C. W. EARLE. With an Appendix by Lady CONSTANCE LYTTON. Sixteenth Edition. Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Times.—"Intelligent readers of almost any age, especially if they are concerned in the management of a country household, will find these pages throughout both suggestive and amusing."

NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION OF "THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY."

In Seven Volumes, large crown 8vo, with Two Portraits.

The Renaissance in Italy. By JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

1. **The Age of the Despots.** With a Portrait. Price 7s. 6d.
2. **The Revival of Learning.** Price 7s. 6d.
3. **The Fine Arts.** Price 7s. 6d.

4 and 5. **Italian Literature.** Two Vols. Price 15s.
6 and 7. **The Catholic Reaction.** With a Portrait and an Index to the Seven Vols. Price 15s.

Sir Charles Hallé's Life and Letters. Being an Autobiography (1819-60), with Correspondence and Diaries. Edited by his Son, C. E. HALLÉ, and his Daughter, MARIE HALLÉ. With Two Portraits. Demy 8vo, 16s.

Times.—"The volume is one of the most interesting of recent contributions to the literature of music. . . . A strong sense of humour is manifest in the autobiography as well as in the letters, and there are some capital stories scattered up and down the volume."

The Memoirs of Baron Thiébault (late Lieutenant-General in the French Army). With Recollections of the Republic, the Consulate, and the Empire. Translated and Condensed by A. J. BUTLER, M.A., Translator of the "Memoirs of Marbot." With Two Portraits and Two Maps. Two Vols. demy 8vo, 28s.

Times.—"Mr. Butler's work has been admirably done. . . . These memoirs abound in varied interest, and, moreover, they have no little literary merit. . . . For solid history, bright sketches of rough campaigning, shrewd studies of character, and lively anecdote, these memoirs yield in no degree to others."

Prehistoric Man and Beast. By the Rev. H. N. HUTCHINSON, Author of "Extinct Monsters," "Creatures of Other Days," etc. With a Preface by Sir HENRY HOWORTH, M.P., F.R.S.E., and Ten full-page Illustrations. Small demy 8vo, 10s. 6d.

Knowledge.—"A striking picture of living men and conditions as they once existed. . . . It combines graphic description with scientific accuracy, and is an admirable example of what a judicious use of the imagination can achieve upon a basis of established facts."

Gabriele von Bulow, Daughter of Wilhelm von Humboldt. A Memoir compiled from the Family Papers of Wilhelm von Humboldt and his Children, 1791-1887. Translated by CLARA NORDLINGER. With Portraits and a Preface by Sir EDWARD B. MALET, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., etc. Demy 8vo, 16s.

Times.—"Miss Nordlinger's excellent translation gives English readers an opportunity of becoming acquainted with a very charming personality, and of following the events of a life which was bound up with many interesting incidents and phases of English history."

LONDON: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

SMITH, ELDER, & CO.'S PUBLICATIONS.

Songs of Action. By CONAN DOYLE. Second Impression. Small crown 8vo, 5s.

World.—"Dr. Conan Doyle has the gift of writing good rattling songs with all the swing of Rudyard Kipling. . . . His songs are full of high spirits and 'go.'"

Punch.—Dr. Conan Doyle has well named his verse 'Songs of Action.' It pulsates with life and movement, whether the scenes be laid on sea or land, on ship or horseback."

Mr. Gregory's Letter-Box, 1813-1830. Edited by Lady GREGORY. With a Portrait. Demy 8vo, 12s. 6d.

World.—"Lady Gregory's pages bristle with good stories. Indeed, the great difficulty of a reviewer in dealing with this fascinating book is the plethora of good things that clamour for quotation."

Egypt in the Nineteenth Century; or, Mehemet Ali and his Successors until the British Occupation in 1882. By DONALD A. CAMERON, H.B.M.'s Consul at Port Saïd. With a Map. Post 8vo, 6s.

Times.—"A valuable handbook to the subject. . . . Mr. Cameron has the rare gift of knowing what to leave out, and, instead of confusing his pages with unimportant details, he presents a clear outline picture filled in just enough to put the reader in possession of the necessary points."

Indian Frontier Policy: An Historical Sketch. By General Sir JOHN ADYE, G.C.B., R.A., Author of "Recollections of a Military Life." With Map. Demy 8vo, 3s. 6d.

The Life of Sir John Hawley Glover, R.N., G.C.M.G. By Lady GLOVER. Edited by the Right Hon. Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Bart., G.C.S.I., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S. With Portrait and Maps. Demy 8vo, 14s.

World.—"Written with noteworthy tact, ability, and discretion by his widow. . . . One of the best and most satisfactory biographies of its class produced within recent years."

The Life of Lord Lawrence. By R. BOSWORTH SMITH, M.A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford; Assistant Master at Harrow School, Author of "Mohammed and Mohammedanism," "Carthage and the Carthaginians," etc. Revised and Cheaper Edition, being the Sixth Edition. With Two Portraits and Two Maps. Two Vols. large crown 8vo, 21s.

Life of Sir Henry Lawrence. By Major-General Sir HERBERT BENJAMIN EDWARDES, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.; and HERMAN MERIVALE, C.B. With Two Portraits. 8vo, 12s.

Life of Lieut.-General Sir James Outram. By Major-General Sir FREDERIC J. GOLDSMID, C.B., K.C.S.I. Second Edition. Two Vols. demy 8vo, 32s.

The Life of Mahomet. From Original Sources. By Sir WM. MUIR, K.C.S.I. Third Edition, with a new Map and several Illustrations. 8vo, 16s.

By the same Author.

The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt, 1260-1570 A.D. With Twelve full-page Illustrations and a Map. 8vo, 10s. 6d.

The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall. Third Edition. With Maps. Demy 8vo, 16s.

The Merv Oasis. Travels and Adventures East of the Caspian during the Years 1879-80-81, including Five Months' Residence among the Tekkes of Merv. By EDMOND O'DONOVAN, Special Correspondent of the *Daily News*. With Portrait, Maps, and Facsimiles of State Documents. In Two Vols. demy 8vo, 36s.

Merv. A Story of Adventures and Captivity. Epitomised from "The Merv Oasis." By EDMOND O'DONOVAN, Special Correspondent of the *Daily News*. With a Portrait. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Essays on the External Policy of India. By the late J. W. S. WYLLIE, C.S.I., Indian Civil Service, sometime Acting Foreign Secretary to the Government of India. Edited, with a brief Life, by Sir W. W. HUNTER, B.A., LL.D. With a Portrait of the Author. 8vo, 14s.

The Annals of Rural Bengal. From Official Records and the Archives of Ancient Families. By Sir W. W. HUNTER, LL.D. Vol. I. The Ethnical Frontier. Fifth Edition. Demy 8vo, 18s. Also the New, Revised, and Cheaper Edition (the Seventh). Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

By the same Author.

Orissa; or, The Vicissitudes of an Indian Province under Native and British Rule. Being the Second and Third Volumes of "Annals of Rural Bengal." With Illustrations. Two Vols. demy 8vo, 32s.

A Life of the Earl of Mayo, Fourth Viceroy of India. Second Edition. Two Vols. demy 8vo, 24s.

The Indian Empire: Its Peoples, History, and Products. Third and Standard Edition. With Map. Demy 8vo, 28s.

LONDON: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

NEW EDITIONS AND IMPRESSIONS.

NEW EDITION OF SIR WM. MUIR'S "CALIPHATE."
With Maps. Third Edition. Demy 8vo, 16s.

The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall. By Sir William Muir, K.C.S.I., LL.D., etc., Author of "The Life of Mahomet," "The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty," etc.

LORD ARMSTRONG'S "ELECTRIC MOVEMENT IN AIR AND WATER."
New Edition. With Additional Plates. Imperial 4to, 30s. net.

Electric Movement in Air and Water. By Lord Armstrong, C.B., F.R.S., etc. With a SUPPLEMENT, containing a continuation of his Experiments, together with an Extension of them made in concert with Henry Stroud, M.A., D.Sc, Professor of Physics, Durham College of Science, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The Purchasers of the First Edition will, on application to Smith, Elder, & Co., receive gratis a copy of the Supplement.

Fights for the Flag. By W. H. Fitchett ("Vedette"), Author of "Deeds that Won the Empire." Second Edition. With Sixteen Portraits, Thirteen Plans, and a Facsimile Letter of the Duke of Marlborough. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Review of Reviews.—"This is the second volume of the series which has achieved one of the greatest literary successes of our time . . . As a gift-book, or as a book to take up and read at odd moments, or to devour at a prolonged sitting, this book has few equals."

A Life of William Shakespeare. By Sidney Lee, Editor of "The Dictionary of National Biography." Fourth Edition. With Two Portraits of Shakespeare, a Portrait of the Earl of Southampton, and Facsimiles of Shakespeare's known Signatures. Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Literature.—"Mr. Lee's work, both for its literary qualities and its scholarship, does credit to English letters, and it will probably be regarded for years to come as the most useful, the most judicious, and the most authoritative of all existing biographies of the poet."

The Cruise of the "Cachalot" round the World after Sperm Whales. By Frank T. Bullen, First Mate. The Volume includes a Letter to the Author from Rudyard Kipling. Third Edition. With Eight Illustrations and a Chart. Large post 8vo, 8s 6d.

Times.—"Mr. Bullen has a splendid subject, and he handles it with the pen of a master. . . . 'The Cruise of the *Cachalot*' is a book which cannot but fascinate all lovers of the sea, and all who can appreciate a masterly presentation of its wonder and its mystery, its terrors and its trials, its humours and its tragedies."

The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891). By R. Barry O'Brien, Author of "Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland," etc. Third Edition. With a Portrait, a View of Avondale, and a Facsimile Letter. Two Vols. large post 8vo, 21s.

The **Earl of Rosebery** at Edinburgh.—"The remarkable biography of a remarkable man."
Daily Chronicle.—"A book which ranks among the great biographies of the century."

Pages from a Private Diary. Reprinted from the *Cornhill Magazine.* Third Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Athenæum.—"Full of happy sayings, of stories, and of pleasant turns of observation . . . and amusing from cover to cover. . . . Really a model to modern writers of diaries for the public."

Sir Frank Lockwood. A Biographical Sketch by Augustine Birrell, Q.C., M.P. Fourth Edition. With Two Portraits, Ten full-page Illustrations, and Two Facsimile Letters. Large crown 8vo, 10s. 6d.

Times.—"This is in many respects a model of biography, vivid, sympathetic, and entertaining, and full without overflowing the due bounds of personal history."

Collections and Recollections. By "One who has kept a Diary." Seventh Impression. With a Frontispiece. Demy 8vo, 16s.

Review of Reviews.—"'Collections and Recollections' will rank high among the books of recent years which have added to the gaiety of the nation."

Aurora Leigh. By Elizabeth Barrett Browning. New and Cheaper Edition. With an Introduction by Algernon Charles Swinburne, and a Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth, gilt edges, 3s. 6d.

The Ring and the Book. By Robert Browning. New Edition. With Three Portraits and Eleven full-page Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, 8s. 6d.

The Castle Inn. By Stanley J. Weyman, Author of "A Gentleman of France," "Shrewsbury," etc. Fourth Edition. With a Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Times.—"A story which the reader follows with excited curiosity, and his characters are not only admirable in themselves, but true to their period. The opening scene is of the essence of romance, and worthy of Dumas. . . . In brief, author and readers are to be congratulated, and, as Toad in the Hole says, 'This is what you can recommend to a friend.'"

Helbeck of Bannisdale. By Mrs. Humphry Ward. Fifth Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Times.—"A book which will rank with Mrs. Humphry Ward's best work. . . . The story is a story of a great passion worthily told."

The Red Axe. By S. R. Crockett. Third Edition. With Eight full-page Illustrations. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Daily Graphic.—"Full of life and colour and action; and some of the descriptive passages are quite the best things the author has done."

Roden's Corner. By Henry Seton Merriman. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

St. James's Gazette.—"A story that is far too interesting to lay down until the last page is turned."

London: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 Waterloo Place, S.W.

BINDING SECT. JUL 30 1980

305109318077

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

DS
236
M93
1898

Muir, (Sir) William
The caliphate

Sig.Sam.

SIGMUND SAMUEL LIBRARY